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SHAKSPERE

HAMLET

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The Lake English Classics

REVISED EDITION WITH HELPS TO STUDY

SHAKSPERE'S

HAMLET

EDITED FOR SCHOOL USE

BY

WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON

PRESIDENT SMITH COLLEGE

SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY
CHICAGO NEW YORK

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PREFACE.

The aim in the present series is to offer a satisfactory text of each play with as full an equipment of introduction and notes as is necessary for thorough intelligibility. In the case of *Hamlet*, the text presents a problem of exceptional difficulty. Each of the two main sources of the text, the second Quarto and the first Folio, contains passages not found in the other. Modern editions include both sets of passages, thus giving a form of the play considerably longer than any presented on the stage in Shakspeare's time. The present text is based on the second Quarto, the longer of the two early versions, and the additional passages from the first Folio are enclosed in square brackets. It is thus possible to read the play in what is, so far as length is concerned at least, one of the forms in which it was acted on the Jacobean stage; while all the advantages of a complete text, compiled from both sources, are preserved.

The first section of the introduction, dealing with Shakspeare and the drama, is intended to give the student an idea of the place of the play in literary history. In the treatment of the

source of the play the attempt has been made to give the essential facts with regard to the earlier forms of the story in as simple a form as is consistent with accuracy. So many theories have been put forth with regard to the relations of the different versions that it was manifestly impossible to mention more than a very few; and in his selection of these the editor has been guided by his own judgment. The limits of the scope of this series have made necessary at times a summary treatment or even a neglect of views which he realizes are entitled to a consideration more detailed than was possible here. The sections on language and metre present some of the peculiarities of Shakspeare's English and versification in a more systematic fashion than is possible in separate notes.

Although the task of aesthetic interpretation has been, for the most part, left to the teacher, the editor has ventured to draw attention in the notes to some of the more important points in the structure of the plot and in the exposition of character. No attempt, however, has been made to argue the great controverted questions of the play, though it is hardly to be expected that all traces of the editor's attitude on these have been avoided.

Among previous editions used in the preparation of the present volume, Dr. Furness's *Variorum Hamlet* has been, as usual, of immense

service. To the more recent studies of Professor Boas in his new edition of Kyd, and of Professor A. H. Thorndike in the brilliant discussion quoted in the introduction, special obligations must be acknowledged. Of a debt somewhat different in kind, the editor has been constantly reminded in the writing of these notes. The major part of what is of value in them is due to the training received from his teachers, the late Professor Child and Professor George Lyman Kittredge, both of Harvard. It is impossible after a lapse of years to distinguish the precise source of individual interpretations, so that this general statement of indebtedness and gratitude must perforce take the place of detailed acknowledgements.

For further details on the life and works of Shakspeare, the following may be referred to: Dowden's *Shakspeare Primer* and *Shakspeare, His Mind and Art*; Sidney Lee's *Life of William Shakespeare*; *William Shakspeare*, by Barrett Wendell; *Shakspeare and His Predecessors*, by F. S. Boas; and *The Age of Shakespeare*, by Allen and Seccombe. The most exhaustive account of the English Drama down to the eighteenth century is A. W. Ward's *History of English Dramatic Literature*. Both this work and that of Sidney Lee are rich in bibliographical information. For questions of language and grammar, see A. Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon*, J. Bartlett's *Concordance to Shakespeare*, E. A. Abbott's Shake-

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spearian Grammar; and, for general questions of dramatic construction, Gustav Freytag's *Technik des Dramas*, translated into English by E. J. MacEwan, and Dr. Elisabeth Woodbridge's *The Drama, Its Law and Its Technique*.

HARVARD UNIVERSITY,

September, 1903.

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INTRODUCTION.

I. SHAKSPERE AND THE ENGLISH DRAMA.

The wonderful rapidity of the development of the English drama in the last quarter of the sixteenth century stands in striking contrast to the slowness of its growth before that period. The religious drama, out of which the modern dramatic forms were to spring, had dragged through centuries with comparatively little change, and was still alive when, in 1576, the first theatre was built in London. By 1600 Shakspeare had written more than half his plays and stood completely master of the art which he brought to a pitch unsurpassed in any age. Much of this extraordinary later progress was due to contemporary causes; but there entered into it also certain other elements which can be understood only in the light of the attempts that had been made in the three or four preceding centuries.

In England, as in Greece, the drama sprang from religious ceremonial. The Mass, the centre of

The Drama before Shakspeare.	the public worship of the Roman church, contained dramatic material in the gestures of the officiating priests, in the narratives contained in the Lessons, and in the responsive singing and chant-
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ing. Latin, the language in which the services were conducted, was unintelligible to the mass of the people, and as early as the fifth century the clergy had begun to use such devices as *tableaux vivants* of scenes like the marriage in Cana and the Adoration of the Magi to make comprehensible important events in Bible history. Later, the Easter services were illuminated by representations of the scene at the sepulchre on the morning of the Resurrection, in which a wooden, and afterwards a stone, structure was used for the tomb itself, and the dialogue was chanted by different speakers representing respectively the angel, the disciples, and the women. From such beginnings as this there gradually evolved the earliest forms of the MIRACLE PLAY.

As the presentations became more elaborate, the place of performance was moved first to the churchyard, then to the fields, and finally to the streets and open spaces of the towns. With this change of locality went a change in the language and in the actors, and an extension of the field from which the subjects were chosen. Latin gave way to the vernacular, and the priests to laymen; and miracle plays representing the lives of patron saints were given by schools, trade gilds, and other lay institutions. A further development appeared when, instead of single plays, whole series such as the extant York, Chester, and Coventry cycles were given, dealing in chrono-

logical order with the most important events in Bible history from the Creation to the Day of Judgment.

The stage used for the miracle play as thus developed was a platform mounted on wheels, which was moved from space to space through the streets. Each trade undertook one or more plays, and, when possible, these were allotted with reference to the nature of the particular trade. Thus the play representing the visit of the Magi bearing gifts to the infant Christ was given to the goldsmiths, and the Building of the Ark to the carpenters. The costumes were conventional and frequently grotesque. Judas always wore red hair and a red beard; Herod appeared as a fierce Saracen; the devil had a terrifying mask and a tail; and divine personages wore gilt hair.

Meanwhile the attitude of the church towards these performances had changed. Priests were forbidden to take part in them, and as early as the fourteenth century we find sermons directed against them. The secular management had a more important result in the introduction of comic elements. Figures such as Noah's wife and Herod became frankly farcical, and whole episodes drawn from contemporary life and full of local color were invented, in which the original aim of edification was displaced by an explicit attempt at pure entertainment. Most of these features were characteristic of the religious drama in gen-

eral throughout Western Europe. But the local and contemporary elements naturally tended to become national; and in England we find in these humorous episodes the beginnings of native comedy.

Long before the miracle plays had reached their height, the next stage in the development of the drama had begun. Even in very early performances there had appeared, among the *dramatis personae* drawn from the Scriptures, personifications of abstract qualities such as Righteousness, Peace, Mercy, and Truth. In the fifteenth century this allegorical tendency, which was prevalent also in the non-dramatic literature of the age, resulted in the rise of another kind of play, the MORALITY, in which all the characters were personifications, and in which the aim, at first the teaching of moral lessons, later became frequently satirical. Thus the most powerful of all the Moralities, Sir David Lindesay's *Satire of the Three Estates*, is a direct attack upon the corruption in the church just before the Reformation.

The advance implied in the Morality consisted not so much in any increase in the vitality of the characters or in the interest of the plot (in both of which, indeed, there was usually a falling off), as in the fact that in it the drama had freed itself from the bondage of having to choose its subject matter from one set of sources—the Bible, the Apocrypha, and the Lives of the Saints.

This freedom was shared by the INTERLUDE, a form not always to be distinguished from the Morality, but one in which the tendency was to substitute for personified abstractions actual social types such as the Priest, the Pardoner, or the Palmer. A feature of both forms was the Vice, a humorous character who appeared under the various disguises of Hypocrisy, Fraud, and the like, and whose function it was to make fun, chiefly at the expense of the Devil. The Vice is historically important as having bequeathed some of his characteristics to the Fool of the later drama.

John Heywood, the most important writer of Interludes, lived well into the reign of Elizabeth, and even the miracle play persisted into the reign of her successor in the seventeenth century. But long before it finally disappeared it had become a mere medieval survival. A new England had meantime come into being and new forces were at work, manifesting themselves in a dramatic literature infinitely beyond anything even suggested by the crude forms which have been described.

The great European intellectual movement known as the Renaissance had at last reached England, and it brought with it materials for an unparalleled advance in all the living forms of literature. Italy and the classics, especially, supplied literary models and material. Not only

were translations from these sources abundant, but Italian players visited England, and performed before Queen Elizabeth. France and Spain, as well as Italy, flooded the literary market with collections of tales, from which, both in the original languages and in such translations as are found in Paynter's *Palace of Pleasure* (published 1566-67), the dramatists drew materials for their plots.

These literary conditions, however, did not do much beyond offering a means of expression. For a movement so magnificent in scale as that which produced the Elizabethan Drama, something is needed besides models and material. In the present instance this something is to be found in the state of exaltation which characterized the spirit of the English people in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Politically, the nation was at last one after the protracted divisions of the Reformation, and its pride was stimulated by its success in the fight with Spain. Intellectually, it was sharing with the rest of Europe the exhilaration of the Renaissance. New lines of action in all parts of the world, new lines of thought in all departments of scholarship and speculation, were opening up; and the whole land was throbbing with life.

In its very beginnings the new movement in England showed signs of that combination of native tradition and foreign influence which was to char-

acterize it throughout. The first regular English comedy, Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister* was an adaptation of the plot of the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus to contemporary English life. After a short period of experiment by amateurs working chiefly under the influence of Seneca, we come on a band of professional playwrights who not only prepared the way for Shakspeare, but in some instances produced works of great intrinsic worth. The mythological dramas of Lyly with the bright repartee of their prose dialogue and the music of their occasional lyrics, the interesting experiments of Greene and Peele, and the horrors of the tragedy of Kyd, are all full of suggestions of what was to come. But by far the greatest of Shakspeare's forerunners was Christopher Marlowe, who not only has the credit of fixing blank verse as the future poetic medium for English tragedy, but who in his plays from *Tamburlaine* to *Edward II.* contributed to the list of the great permanent masterpieces of the English drama.

It was in the professional society of these men that Shakspeare found himself when he came to

London. Born in the provincial town of Stratford-on-Avon in the heart of England, he was baptized on April 26, 1564 (May 6th, according to our reckoning). The exact day of his birth is unknown. His father was John Shakspeare, a fairly prosperous tradesman, who may be supposed

**Shakspeare's
Early Life.**

to have followed the custom of his class in educating his son. If this were so, William would be sent to the Grammar School, already able to read, when he was seven, and there he would be set to work on Latin Grammar, followed by reading, up to the fourth year, in Cato's *Maxims*, Aesop's *Fables*, and parts of Ovid, Cicero, and the medieval poet Mantuanus. If he continued through the fifth and sixth years, he would read parts of Vergil, Horace, Terence, Plautus, and the Satirists. Greek was not usually taught in the Grammar Schools. Whether he went through this course or not we have no means of knowing, except the evidence afforded by the use of the classics in his works, and the famous dictum of his friend, Ben Jonson, that he had "small Latin and less Greek." What we are sure of is that he was a boy with remarkable acuteness of observation, who used his chances for picking up facts of all kinds; for only thus could he have accumulated the fund of information which he put to such a variety of uses in his writings.

Throughout the poet's boyhood the fortunes of John Shakspeare kept improving until he reached the position of High Bailiff or Mayor of Stratford. When William was about thirteen, however, his father began to meet with reverses, and these are conjectured to have led to the boy's being taken from school early and set to work. What business he was taught we do not know, and indeed we

have little more information about him till the date of his marriage in November, 1582, to Anne Hathaway, a woman from a neighboring village, who was seven years his senior. Concerning his occupations in the years immediately preceding and succeeding his marriage several traditions have come down,—of his having been apprenticed as a butcher, of his having taken part in poaching expeditions, and the like—but none of these is based upon sufficient evidence. About 1585 he left Stratford, and probably by the next year he had found his way to London.

How soon and in what capacity he first became attached to the theatres we are again unable to say, but by 1592 he had certainly been engaged in theatrical affairs long enough to give some occasion for the jealous outburst of a rival playwright, Robert Greene, who, in a pamphlet posthumously published in that year, accused him of plagiarism. Henry Chettle, the editor of Greene's pamphlet, shortly after apologized for his connection with the charge, and bore witness to Shakspeare's honorable reputation as a man and to his skill both as an actor and a dramatist.

Robert Greene, who thus supplies us with the earliest extant indications of his rival's presence in London, was in many ways a typical figure among the playwrights with whom Shakspeare worked during this early period. A member of both universities, Greene came to the metropolis while

yet a young man, and there led a life of the most diversified literary activity, varied with bouts of the wildest debauchery. He was a writer of satirical and controversial pamphlets, of romantic tales, of elegiac, pastoral, and lyric poetry, a translator, a dramatist,—in fact, a literary jack-of-all-trades. The society in which he lived consisted in part of “University Wits” like himself, in part of the low men and women who haunted the vile taverns of the slums to prey upon such as he. “A world of blackguardism dashed with genius,” it has been called, and the phrase is fit enough. Among such surroundings Greene lived, and among them he died, bankrupt in body and estate, the victim of his own ill-governed passions.

In conjunction with such men as this Shakspeare began his life-work. His first dramatic efforts were made in revising the plays of his predecessors with a view to their revival on the stage; and in *Titus Andronicus* and the first part of *Henry VI.* we have examples of this kind of work. The next step was probably the production of plays in collaboration with other writers, and to this practice, which he almost abandoned in the middle of his career, he seems to have returned in his later years in such plays as *Pericles*, *Henry VIII.*, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. How far Shakspeare was of this dissolute set to which his fellow-workers belonged it is impossible to tell; but we know that by and by, as he gained mastery

over his art and became more and more independent in work and in fortune, he left this sordid life behind him, and aimed at the establishment of a family. In half a dozen years from the time of Greene's attack, he had reached the top of his profession, was a sharer in the profits of his theatre, and had invested his savings in land and houses in his native town. The youth who ten years before had left Stratford poor and burdened with a wife and three children, had now become "William Shakspeare, Gentleman."

During these years Shakspeare's literary work was not confined to the drama, which, indeed, was then hardly regarded as a form of literature. In 1593 he published *Venus and Adonis*, and in 1594, *Lucrece*, two poems belonging to a class of highly wrought versions of classical legends which was then fashionable, and of which Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* is the other most famous example. For several years, too, in the last decade of the sixteenth century and the first few years of the seventeenth, he was composing a series of sonnets on love and friendship, in this, too, following a literary fashion of the time. Yet these give us more in the way of self-revelation than anything else he has left. From them we seem to be able to catch glimpses of his attitude towards his profession, and one of them makes us realize so vividly his perception of the tragic risks of his surroundings that it is set down here:

O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
 The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
 That did not better for my life provide
 Than public means which public manners breeds.
 Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
 And almost thence my nature is subdued
 To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
 Pity me then and wish I were renewed;
 Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink
 Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection;
 No bitterness that I will bitter think,
 Nor double penance to correct correction.
 Pity me then, dear friend, and I assure ye
 Even that your pity is enough to cure me.

It does not seem possible to avoid the inferences lying on the surface in this poem; but whatever confessions it may imply, it serves, too, to give us the assurance that Shakspeare did not easily and blindly yield to the temptations that surrounded the life of the theatre of his time.

For the theatre of Shakspeare's day was no very reputable affair. Externally it appears to us now
 a very meagre apparatus—almost
 absurdly so, when we reflect on the
 grandeur of the compositions for
 which it gave occasion. A roughly circular
 wooden building, with a roof over the stage
 and over the galleries, but with the pit often
 open to the wind and weather, having very
 little scenery and practically no attempt at the
 achievement of stage-illusion,—such was the
 scene of the production of some of the greatest

**The Eliza-
 bethan
 Theatre.**

imaginative works the world has seen. Nor was the audience very choice. The more respectable citizens of Puritan tendencies frowned on the theatre to such an extent that it was found advisable to place the buildings outside the city limits, and beyond the jurisdiction of the city fathers. The pit was thronged with a motley crowd of petty tradesfolk and the dregs of the town; the gallants of the time sat on stools on the stage, "drinking" tobacco and chaffing the actors, their efforts divided between displaying their wit and their clothes. The actors were all male, the women's parts being taken by boys whose voices were not yet broken. The costumes, frequently the cast-off clothing of the gallants, were often gorgeous, but seldom appropriate. Thus the success of the performance had to depend upon the excellence of the piece, the merit of the acting, and the readiness of appreciation of the audience.

This last point, however, was more to be relied upon than a modern student might imagine. Despite their dubious respectability, the Elizabethan play-goers must have been of wonderfully keen intellectual susceptibilities. For clever feats in the manipulation of language, for puns, happy alliterations, delicate melody such as we find in the lyrics of the times, for the thunder of the pentameter as it rolls through the tragedies of Marlowe, they had a practiced taste. Qualities which we now expect to appeal chiefly to the

closet student were keenly relished by men who could neither read nor write, and who at the same time enjoyed jokes which would be too broad, and stage massacres which would be too bloody, for a modern audience of sensibilities much less acute in these other directions. In it all we see how far-reaching was the wonderful vitality of the time.

This audience Shakspeare knew thoroughly, and in his writing he showed himself always, with whatever growth in permanent artistic qualities, the clever man of business with his eye on the market. Thus we can trace throughout the course of his production two main lines: one indicative of the changes of theatrical fashions; one, more subtle and more liable to misinterpretation, showing the progress of his own spiritual growth.

The chronology of Shakspeare's plays will probably never be made out with complete assurance, but already much has been ascertained (1) from external evidence such as dates of acting or publication, and allusions in other works, and (2) from internal evidence such as references to books or events of known date, and considerations of metre and language. The following arrangement represents what is probably an approximately correct view of the chronological sequence of his works, though scholars are far from being agreed upon many of the details.

COMEDIES.		HISTORIES.		TRAGEDIES.	
1590-93..	{ Love's Labor's Lost	1. 2. 3. Henry VI.	Romeo and Juliet (revised about	[1596, 97]	
	{ Two Gentlemen of Verona..	Richard III.	Titus Andronicus		
	{ Comedy of Errors	Richard II.			
1594, 95..	{ Merchant of Venice	King John			
	{ Midsummer Night's Dream				
	{ All's Well that Ends Well.				
1596-98..	{ Taming of the Shrew	1. 2. Henry IV.			
	{ Merry Wives of Windsor ..	Henry V.			
	{ Much Ado about Nothing..				
1599, 1600	{ As You Like It				
	{ Twelfth Night				
1601			Julius Caesar		
1602			Hamlet		
1603	Troilus and Cressida.		Othello		
1604	Measure for Measure.		Macbeth		
1605, 6..			King Lear		
1607	Pericles		Timon of Athens		
1608			Antony and Cleopatra		
1609			Coriolanus		
1610, 11..	{ Cymbeline				
	{ Winter's Tale				
	{ Tempest				
1612, 13..	Two Noble Kinsmen.....	Henry VIII.			

The first of these groups contains three comedies of a distinctly experimental character, and a number of chronicle-histories, some of which, like the three parts of *Henry VI.*, were almost certainly written in collaboration with other playwrights. The comedies are light, full of ingenious plays on words, and the verse is often rhymed. The first of them, at least, shows the influence of Lyly. The histories also betray a considerable delight in language for its own sake, and the Marlowesque blank verse, at its best eloquent and highly poetical, not infrequently becomes ranting, while the pause at the end of each line tends to become monotonous. No copy of *Romeo and Juliet* in its earliest form is known to be in existence, and the extent of Shakspeare's share in *Titus Andronicus* is still debated.

The second period contains a group of comedies marked by brilliance in the dialogue; wholesomeness, capacity, and high spirits in the main characters, and a pervading feeling of good-humor. The histories contain a larger comic element than in the first period, and are no longer suggestive of Marlowe. Rhymes have become less frequent, and the blank verse has freed itself from the bondage of the end-stopped line.

The plays of the third period are tragedies, or comedies with a prevailing tragic tone. Shakspeare here turned his attention to those elements in life which produce perplexity and disaster, and

in this series of masterpieces we have his most magnificent achievement. His power of perfect adaptation of language to thought and feeling had now reached its height, and his verse had become thoroughly flexible without having lost strength.

In the fourth period Shakspeare returned to comedy. These plays, written during his last years in London, are again romantic in subject and treatment, and technically seem to show the influence of the earlier successes of Beaumont and Fletcher. But in place of the high spirits which characterized the comedies of the earlier periods we have a placid optimism, and a recurrence of situations which are more ingenious than plausible, and which are marked externally by reunions and reconciliations and internally by repentance and forgiveness. The verse is singularly sweet and highly poetical; and the departure from the end-stopped line has now gone so far that we see clearly the beginnings of that tendency which went to such an extreme in some of Shakspeare's successors that it at times became hard to distinguish the metre at all.

In *Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Henry VIII.*, Shakspeare again worked in partnership, the collaborator being, in all probability, John Fletcher.

Nothing that we know of Shakspeare's life from external sources justifies us in saying, as has frequently been said, that the changes of mood in

his work from period to period corresponded to changes in the man Shakspeare. As an artist he certainly seems to have viewed life now in this light, now in that; but it is worth noting that the period of his gloomiest plays coincides with the period of his greatest worldly prosperity. It has already been hinted, too, that much of his change of manner and subject was dictated by the variations of theatrical fashion and the example of successful contemporaries.

Throughout nearly the whole of these marvelously fertile years Shakspeare seems to have stayed in London; but from 1610 to 1612

**Shakspeare's
Last Years.** he was making Stratford more and more his place of abode, and at the same time he was beginning to write less. After 1611 he wrote only in collaboration; and having spent about five years in peaceful retirement in the town from which he had set out a penniless youth, and to which he returned a man of reputation and fortune, he died on April 23, 1616. His only son, Hamnet, having died in boyhood, of his immediate family there survived him his wife and his two daughters, Susanna and Judith, both of whom were well married. He lies buried in the parish church of Stratford.

II. HAMLET

On July 26th, 1602, "a booke called the Revenge of Hamlett" was entered in the Stationers' Register, and in the following year a *Hamlet* ascribed on the title-page to Shakspeare was published (Q_1). In 1604 a second Quarto appeared, "newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect coppie." A comparison of these two editions shows (1) that Q_1 is an attempt to present an earlier and much shorter form of the play; (2) that the text of Q_1 is so corrupt as to force the inference that it was unauthorized and was printed probably from a manuscript concocted from notes taken at the theatre, possibly with the assistance of the written parts of one or two minor actors; (3) that Q_2 represents a version of the play revised and greatly enlarged. Thus it is not possible to give a single date of composition, but it may be said that Shakspeare probably wrote his first version about 1601-2, and his second in 1603-4. This places it in the order of the tragedies immediately after *Julius Caesar* and before *Othello* and *Macbeth*, while the serious comedies of *Troilus and Cressida* and *Measure for Measure* are almost contemporary. It is the earliest of that tremendous

series of dramas in which the author seems burdened with a peculiarly intimate sense of the results of human weakness and crime.

The Quarto of 1604 was followed by a succession of other quartos, each printed from the one preced-

**Source of the
Text.**

ing, and of little or no independent value. The earliest collected edition of Shakspeare's works, issued in 1623

by the two actors Heminge and Condell and known as the First Folio (F_1), contained a *Hamlet* printed from a manuscript different from that which had been used in Q_2 . It omitted a number of passages and added a few; and the text, though more carefully printed than that of Q_2 , is in some respects inferior. The present edition is based on Q_2 supplemented and corrected by F_1 , with occasional emendations drawn from modern editors.

The story of Hamlet is first found in the *History of the Danes* written in Latin by Saxo Gram-

**Source of the
Plot.**

maticus in the twelfth century. It was told in French by Belleforest in his *Histoires Tragiques* (1570), and

his version was translated into English. The only edition of this English *Hystorie of Hamblet* now extant was published in 1608, but there may have been earlier editions. By 1587, a play on the subject, probably by Thomas Kyd, the author of *The Spanish Tragedy*, was already on the English stage, and continued to be acted at intervals during the next decade. On this play it is supposed

that Shakspeare based his tragedy, and it may be that passages from it survive in Q_1 and even in the later versions. But no copy of the old play has come down to us, and though we may compare Shakspeare's tragedy with the prose tale, it is impossible to know certainly how many of the differences may be due to his dramatic predecessor. It has been thought by some scholars that this earlier play is represented by a German prose drama on Hamlet which formed part of the repertory of one of the companies of English players traveling in Germany in the seventeenth century, and which was printed in 1781 from a manuscript dated 1710. This German play, however, whether based on the work of Kyd, or as some think, on Q_1 , reproduces its original in so degraded a form that it is not possible to take it as a fair representation of its source.

We have, then, to be content with conjecture never quite verifiable as to the part in the received text of *Hamlet* which is to be credited to the author of the lost play. In the prose tale we have already the main situation, a king murdered by his brother, who had previously seduced and has now married his queen; and the son of the king aiming at revenge, finally achieving it, and using the device of pretended madness to protect himself in the meantime. But there is no ghost, the murder of Hamlet's father being acknowledged but explained away to the apparent satis-

faction of the people; the madness is assumed by Hamlet for the protection of his own life rather than for the disguising of his plans; and the nature of the madness is more farcical than in Shakspeare, the Prince "wallowing and lying in the dirt and mire." The prototype of Polonius is killed while eavesdropping, but his character bears little resemblance to that of Shakspeare's Lord Chamberlain; Ophelia and Horatio are merely hinted at; and Laertes, Fortinbras, and several of the minor characters are absent altogether. The comic elements contributed by the grave-diggers and Osric are also wanting, and there is no trace of the introspective and contemplative tendencies that bulk so largely in the character of Shakspeare's hero. Of the catastrophe of the drama, too, there is little trace in the story. The Hamlet of the *Hystorie* goes to England without interruption from pirates, witnesses the death of his two companions, returns and kills not only the king but all the courtiers, goes to England again and marries two wives, one of whom betrays him to his death and marries his slayer. It is perhaps needless to add that nothing of the splendid diction of the tragedy is due to the *Hystorie*.

There is, however, another method by which we may form an opinion as to Shakspeare's part in the transformation of this crude tale of blood and treachery into the most famous of English tragedies. A study of other plays of the same type

published before or about the date of *Hamlet* reveals the fact that many of the features which the general reader regards as peculiar to the present play are to be found also in the work of such men as Kyd, Jonson, and Marston.¹ "Poisoning, murders, suicide, insanity, and a ghost occur as in other revenge plays. The refusal of an opportunity to kill the villain, the songs and wild talk of the mad girl, the murder of an innocent intruder, scenes in a churchyard, banquets, reception of ambassadors, funerals, the appearance of the ghost to soldiers on the watch, the play within the play—all these had appeared in other plays as well as in the old *Hamlet*. In other plays, too, there were such minor conventionalities as the swearing on the sword hilt, the descriptive announcement of the death of the heroine, the carrying off of the bodies, the voice of the ghost in the cellar, the reading of a book, the midnight scene with the clock striking, and the business of death-heads."² It thus appears manifest that, in *Hamlet* as elsewhere, the greatness of Shakspeare's achievement does not consist in the invention of plot, motive, situation, or types of

¹ E. g. Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* and Jonson's additions to that play, Marston's *Antonio's Revenge*, and Chettle's *Hoffman*.

² *The Relations of Hamlet to Contemporary Revenge Plays*, by A. H. Thorndike, Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, xvii, 209-210.

character, all of which he shared with his contemporaries, but in so manipulating those elements, in so fusing them together by the intensity of his imagination, that there resulted, not a clever piece of stage-craft, but a fragment of human life.

Hamlet is written mainly in blank verse, which had been since Marlowe the standard metre of the English drama. The chief exceptions are the scenes in which Hamlet plays the madman; those in which he converses with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, with the actors, and with Osric; and the scene with the grave-diggers; all of which are in prose. This is in accordance with Shakspeare's custom of employing verse to indicate the higher emotional and imaginative level. The blank verse of "Aeneas' tale to Dido," II. ii. 489 ff., is purposely made bombastic, probably in allusion to the style in which the same incidents are treated in the *Tragedy of Dido* by Marlowe and Nash; and the verse of the "Murder of Gonzago," III. ii. 151 ff., is stilted and archaic, to remove it from the style of the rest of the play, just as ordinary dramatic verse is removed from actual speech.

The normal type of the blank verse has five iambic feet, that is, ten syllables with the accent falling on the even syllables. From this regular form, however, Shakspeare deviates with great freedom, the commonest variations being these:

1. The addition of an eleventh syllable; *e. g.*:

Which might | deprive | your sove | reignty | of rea |
son, I. iv. 73.

That one | may smile | and smile | and be | a vil | lain,
I. v. 108.

Occasionally this extra syllable occurs in the middle of the line, at the main pause known as the caesura, which is most frequent after the second or third foot; *e. g.*:

Dared to | the com | but; || in which | our val | iant
Ham | let, I. i. 84.

Possess | it inere | ly. || That it | should come | to this! |
I. ii. 137.

2. Frequently what seems an extra syllable is to be slurred in reading. Thus "dangerous" is dissyllabic in

How dan | gerous is | it that | this man | goes loose | ,
IV. iii. 2.

and the middle syllable of "moiety" is slurred in

Against | the which | a moi | ety com | petent | , I. i.
90.

So "whether" is monosyllabic in II. ii. 17. In some lines it is doubtful whether a syllable is to be slurred or read as a light extra syllable, as, *e. g.*, the middle syllable of "labourer" in

Doth make | the night | joint la | bourer with | the
day | , I. i. 78.

3. Short lines lacking one or more feet occur, especially at the end of a speech; *e. g.*:

Of his affection to me, I. iii. 100;
In honourable fashion, I. iii. 111;

and cf. the last speech in II. ii.

4. Long lines of six feet occur; *e. g.*:

Did slay | this For | tinbras; | who by | a sealed | com-
pact |, I. i. 86.

A wor | thy pi | oner. | Once more | remove, | good
friends |, I. v. 163.

Usually in such lines some words bearing the metrical accent are quite unemphatic in reading, as in the fourth foot of I. i. 86; or the line contains an exclamation or nominative of address, like "good friends," above, which may be regarded as extra-metrical.

5. Frequently, especially in the first foot, a trochee is substituted for an iambus, that is, the accent falls on the odd instead of on the even syllable; *e. g.*:

^ˈSeek for | thy noble father in the dust, I. ii. 71.

^ˈThese but | the trappings and the suits of woe, I. ii. 86.

6. It must be remembered, however, that the pronunciation of many words has changed since Shakspeare's time, *e. g.*: ^ˈ*confine*, I. i. 156; *per-*
^ˈ*sever*, I. ii. 92; ^ˈ*character*, I. iii. 59; ^ˈ*records*, I.

v. 99; *as¹pect*, II. ii. 598. Again, the ending *-ion* was often dissyllabic, as in *complex-ion*, I. iv. 27.

Language. Although differences between the language of Shakspeare and that of our own day are obvious to the most casual reader, there is a risk that the student may underestimate the extent of these differences, and assuming that similarity of form implies identity of sense, miss the true interpretation. The most important instances of change of meaning are explained in the notes; but a clearer view of the nature and extent of the contrast between the idiom of *Hamlet* and that of modern English will be gained by a classification of the most frequent features of this contrast. Some of the Shakspearean usages are merely the results of the carelessness and freedom which the more elastic standards of the Elizabethan time permitted; others are forms of expression at that time quite accurate, but now become obsolete.

1. NOUNS. (a) Shakspeare frequently uses an abstract noun with "of" where modern English uses an adjective; *e. g.*: brow of woe = woeful brow or aspect, I. ii. 4; spirit of health = healthy or saved spirit, I. iv. 40; toys of desperation = desperate fancies, I. iv. 75; days of nature = natural days, I. v. 12; fetch of wit = clever device, II. i. 38; thieves of mercy = merciful thieves, IV. vi. 21-22; rights of memory = memorable rights, V. ii. 409.

(b) Abstract nouns are often used in the plural;

e. g.: loves, I. i. 174; wisdoms, I. ii. 15; companies, II. ii. 14; modesties, II. ii. 294.

2. ADJECTIVES. Double comparatives occur; *e. g.*: more richer, III. ii. 301; more rawer, V. ii. 128.

3. PRONOUNS. (a) The nominative is sometimes used for the objective; *e. g.*: till he, I. ii. 105.

(b) The possessive "its" did not come into common use until after the middle of the seventeenth century, and in Shakspeare, as in other early writers, we have "his" for the neuter as well as for the masculine; *e. g.*: "Nature cannot choose *his* origin," I. iv. 26; "The ocean, overpeering of *his* list," IV. v. 88.

(c) The personal pronoun is sometimes used for the reflexive; *e. g.*: prepare you, III. iii. 2; arm you, III. iii. 24.

(d) The ethical dative is more frequent than in modern speech; *e. g.*: "A tanner will last *you* nine year," V. i. 184.

(e) The relative is often omitted after "there is," "there are," etc., as it frequently is in modern colloquial English; *e. g.*: "There is a willow grows aslant a brook," IV. vii. 167.

4. VERBS. (a) A singular verb is often found with a plural subject; *e. g.*: "Upon whose weal depends and rests the lives of many," III. iii. 14-15; "There's letters sealed," III. iv. 202; "There is no ancient gentlemen," V. i. 33.

(b) Less frequently a plural verb is found with a singular subject, especially if a plural noun intervenes; *e. g.*: "The scope of these delated articles allow," I. ii. 37-38.

(c) The "n" is frequently dropped from the past participles of strong verbs in cases where it is retained in modern English; *e. g.*: spoke=spoken, I. i. 45. When the word thus produced might be mistaken for the infinitive, the form of the past tense is found; *e. g.*: took=taken, II. ii. 83.

(d) The "ed" of the past participles of weak verbs ending in "t" is often dropped; *e. g.*: disjoint, I. ii. 20; deject, III. i. 164; bloat, III. iv. 182; distract, IV. v. 2.

(e) Verbs of motion are at times omitted; *e. g.*, "And he to England shall _A along with you," III. iii. 4.

(f) The infinitive with "to" is sometimes used where modern usage requires a gerund; *e. g.*: leave to feed=leave feeding, III. iv. 67.

5. ADVERBS. (a) Double negatives are very often used with a merely intensive force; *e. g.*: "It is not nor it cannot come to good," I. ii. 158. Cf. also III. ii. 5, 19; III. iv. 132, 181; etc.

(b) The form of the adjective is often used for the adverb; *e. g.*: "How prodigal the soul lends the tongue vows," I. iii. 116-17. Cf. "marvellous" in II. i. 3 and III. ii. 298.

6. PREPOSITIONS. The usage in prepositions

was less definite than it is to-day; *e. g.*: on=of, I. i. 55; to=of, I. ii. 37; with=by, I. ii. 205; of=by, I. iv. 18; of=from, II. ii. 11; of=over, II. ii. 27; of=upon, II. ii. 306; in = with IV. iii. 5, IV. v. 90; in = into, V. ii. 70.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

CLAUDIUS, *King of Denmark.*

HAMLET, *son to the late, and nephew to the present King.*

POLONIUS, *Lord Chamberlain.*

HORATIO, *friend to Hamlet.*

LAERTES, *son to Polonius.*

VOLTIMAND,

CORNELIUS,

ROSENCRANTZ,

GUILDENSTERN,

OSRIC,

A Gentleman,

A Priest.

MARCELLUS, } *officers.*

BERNARDO, }

FRANCISCO, *a soldier.*

REYNALDO, *servant to Polonius.*

Players.

Two Clowns, grave-diggers.

FORTINBRAS, *Prince of Norway.*

A Captain.

English Ambassadors.

GERTRUDE, *Queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet.*

OPHELIA, *daughter to Polonius.*

*Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers,
and other Attendants.*

Ghost of Hamlet's Father.

SCENE: *Elsinore, Denmark.*

Handwritten notes:
Hamlet's father
Claudius
relationship between the two
as Hamlet's father

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

ACT FIRST.

SCENE I.

Elsinore. A platform before the castle.

Francisco at his post. Enter to him Bernardo.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me. Stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve. Get thee to bed,
Francisco.

Fran. For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold,

And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who
is there?

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane. 13

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier.

Who hath relieved you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night. [*Exit.*

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,

What, is Horatio there?

Hor. A piece of him.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus. 20

Hor. What, has this thing appeared again
to-night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us; 25
Therefore I have entreated him along,
With us to watch the minutes of this night,
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

Hor. Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile, 30
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we have two nights seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

35 *Ber.* Last night of all,
When yond same star that's westward from
the pole
Had made his course to illume that part of
heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one,—

Enter Ghost.

40 *Mar.* Peace, break thee off! Look, where it
comes again!

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? Mark it,
Horatio.

Hor. Most like; it harrows me with fear and
wonder.

45 *Ber.* It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time of
night,

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By heaven I charge
thee, speak!

50 *Mar.* It is offended.

Ber. See, it stalks away!

Hor. Stay! Speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!

[*Exit Ghost.*

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio! You tremble and look pale.

Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on't? 55

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself.

Such was the very armour he had on 60
When he th' ambitious Norway combated.
So frowned he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead 65
hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our
watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work I know
not;

But, in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that 70
knows,

Why this same strict and most observant
watch

So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;

75 Why such impress of shipwrights, whose
sore task

Does not divide the Sunday from the week.
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the
day,

Who is't that can inform me?

Hor.

That can I;

80 At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appeared to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto pricked on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant
Hamlet—

85 For so this side of our known world esteemed
him—

Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a sealed
compact,

Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror;
90 Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had returned
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,

Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same
covenant,

And carriage of the article designed,

95 His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young
Fortinbras,

Of unimproved mettle hot and full,

Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Sharked up a list of lawless resolute,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't; which is no other— 100
As it doth well appear unto our state—
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsory, those foresaid
lands

So by his father lost; and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations, 105
The source of this our watch and the chief
head

Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Ber. I think it be no other but e'en so.

Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch, so like the 110
king

That was and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted 115
dead

Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

.
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire 120
stands

Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse

And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
135 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.—

Re-enter Ghost.

But soft, behold! Lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay,
illusion!

If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,

140 Speak to me;

If there be any good thing to be done,

That may to thee do ease and grace to me,

Speak to me;

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,

145 Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid,

O speak!

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life

Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,

For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in
death,

150 Speak of it; stay, and speak! [*Cock crows.*]

Stop it, Marcellus.

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber.

'Tis here!

Hor.

'Tis here!

Mar. 'Tis gone!

[*Exit Ghost*]

We do it wrong, being so majestical,

155 To offer it the show of violence;

For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard, 150
The cock; that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day, and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies 155
To his confine; and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated, 160
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit dare stir
abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets
strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallowed and so gracious is the time. 165

Hor. So have I heard and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night 170
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,

As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

175 *Mar.* Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning
know

Where we shall find him most conveniently.

[*Exeunt.*



SCENE II.

A room of state in the castle.

*Enter the King, Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes,
Voltimand, Cornelius, Lords, and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's
death

The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole
kingdom

To be contracted in one brow of woe,

5 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him
Together with remembrance of ourselves.

Therefore our sometime sister, now our
queen,

The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
10 Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,—
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in
marriage,

In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—

Taken to wife; nor have we herein barred
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone ¹⁵
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows that you know: young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame, ²⁰
Colleagued with this dream of his advantage,
He hath not failed to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for ²⁵
him.

Now for ourself and for this time of meeting,
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress ³⁰
His further gait herein, in that the levies,
The lists and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject; and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway; ³⁵
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the
scope
Of these delated articles allow.

[*Giving a paper.*]

Farewell, and let your haste commend your
duty.

Cor. }
40 *Vol.* } In that and all things will we show our duty.

King. We doubt it nothing; heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?

You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?

You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,

45 And lose your voice. What wouldst thou
beg, Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?

The head is not more native to the heart,

The hand more instrumental to the mouth,

Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.

60 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

Laer. ——— My dread lord,

Your leave and favour to return to France;

From whence though willingly I came to

Denmark,

To show my duty in your coronation,

Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,

65 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward
France

And bow them to your gracious leave and
pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What
says Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow,
leave

By laboursome petition, and at last

Upon his will I sealed my hard consent.

I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes. Time be
thine,

And thy best graces spend it at thy will!

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Ham. [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less 65
than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

Ham. Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the
sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on
Denmark.

Do not for ever with thy vailed lids 70

Seek for thy noble father in the dust.

Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives
must die,

Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee? 75

Ham. Seems, madam! Nay, it is; I know not
“seems.”

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, 80

Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,

Together with all forms, moods, shapes of
grief,

That can denote me truly. These indeed
seem,

For they are actions that a man might play;
85 But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father.
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
90 That father lost, lost his, and the survivor
bound

In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow; but to persevere
In obstinate condolment is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;
95 It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschooled;
For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
100 Why should we in our peevish opposition
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd, whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
105 From the first corse till he that died to-day,
"This must be so." We pray you, throw to
earth

This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father; for, let the world take note.

You are the most immediate to our throne,
And with no less nobility of love 110
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire;
And we beseech you, bend you to remain 115
Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers,
Hamlet.

I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Witten-
berg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam. 120

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply.

Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks 125
to-day,

But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the King's rouse the heaven shall bruit
again,

Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew! 130
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God!
God!

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uses of this world!

135 Fie on't! ah fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross
in nature

Possess it merely. That it should come to
this!

But two months dead! Nay, not so much,
not two.

So excellent a king; that was, to this,

140 Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of
heaven

Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and
earth!

Must I remember? Why, she would hang on
him,

As if increase of appetite had grown

145 By what it fed on; and yet, within a
month,—

Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is
woman!—

A little month, or e'er those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's
body,

Like Niobe, all tears,—why she, even she—

150 O God! a beast, that wants discourse of
reason,

Would have mourned longer—married with
my uncle,

My father's brother, but no more like my
father.

Than I to Hercules; within a month,
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes, 133
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not, nor it cannot come to good,—
But break my heart, for I must hold my
tongue.

Enter Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well. 136

Horatio!—or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name
with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Hora-
tio?

Marcellus? 138

Mar. My good lord,—

Ham. I am very glad to see you. [*To Ber.*] Good
even, sir.—

But what, in faith, make you from Witten-
berg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so, 139
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it trustful of your own report

Against yourself. I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?

175 We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student.

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

180 *Ham.* Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral baked-meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!

My father!—methinks I see my father.

185 *Hor.* Where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once; he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

190 *Ham.* Saw? Who?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father!

Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
200 This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,

In the dead waste and middle of the night,
 Been thus encountered. A figure like your
 father,

Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pie, 206
 Appears before them, and with solemn march
 Goes slow and stately by them. Thrice he
 walked

By their oppressed and fear-surprised eyes,
 Within his truncheon's length; whilst they,
 distilled

Almost to jelly with the act of fear, 208
 Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to
 me

In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
 And I with them the third night kept the
 watch;

Where, as they had delivered, both in time,
 Form of the thing, each word made true and 210
 good,

The apparition comes. I knew your father;
 These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we
 watched.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did;

But answer made it none. Yet once me- 212
 thought

It lifted up it head and did address
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak;

But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
220 And vanished from our sight.

Ham. 'T is very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honored lord, 't is true,
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs. But this troubles
me.

225 ✓ Hold you the watch to-night?

Mar. }

Ber. }

We do, my lord.

Ham. Armed, say you?

Mar. }

Ber. }

Armed, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Mar. }

Ber. }

My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

230 *Hor.* O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, looked he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more
In sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fixed his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

235 *Hor.* It would have much amazed you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stayed it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. }
Ber. } Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw't.

Ham. His beard was grizzled? No?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life, 240
A sable silvered.

Ham. I will watch to-night;
Perchance 't will walk again.

Hor. I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all, 245
If you have hitherto concealed this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding, but no tongue.
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well. 250
Upon the platform 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you; farewell.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

My father's spirit in arms! All is not well;
I doubt some foul play. Would the night 255
were come!

Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to
men's eyes. [Exit.]

SCENE III.

A room in Polonius's house.

Enter Laertes and Ophelia.

Laer. My necessities are embarked, farewell;
And, sister, as the winds give benefit
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that?

5 *Laer.* For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
10 No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:

For nature crescent does not grow alone
In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,
The inward service of the mind and soul
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you
now,

15 And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
The virtue of his will; but you must fear,
His greatness weighed, his will is not his
own;

For he himself is subject to his birth.

He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends 20
The safety and health of this whole state;
And therefore must his choice be circum-
scribed

Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he
loves you,

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it 25
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may
sustain,

If with too credent ear you list his songs, 30
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure
open

To his unmastered importunity.

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
And keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire. 35

The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.
Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes.

The canker galls the infants of the spring
Too oft before their buttons be disclosed, 40
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.
Be wary then, best safety lies in fear.

Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

45 *Oph.* I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart. But, good my
brother,

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
Whilst, like a puffed and reckless libertine,
50 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own rede.

Laer. O, fear me not.

I stay too long: but here my father comes.

Enter Polonius.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

55 *Pol.* Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for
shame!

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stayed for. There; my blessing
with thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no
tongue,

60 Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption
tried,

Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
65 Of each new-hatched, unfledged comrade.

Beware

Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,

Bear 't that the opposed may beware of thee.
 Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy
 judgement.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70
 But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
 And they in France of the best rank and
 station

Are of a most select and generous chief in that.
 Neither a borrower nor a lender be; 75
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
 { This above all: to thine own self be true,
 And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80

Farewell; my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you; go, your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well
 What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory locked, 85
 And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. [Exit.]

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord
 Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought. 90

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
 Given private time to you, and you yourself

Have of your audience been most free and
bounteous.

If it be so—as so 'tis put on me,

95 And that in way of caution—I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.
What is between you? Give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many
tenders

100 Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection! pooh! You speak like a green
girl,

Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should
think.

105 *Pol.* Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a
baby

That you have ta'en these tenders for true
pay,

Which are not sterling. Tender yourself
more dearly,

Or—not to crack the wind of the poor
phrase,

Running it thus—you'll tender me a fool.

110 *Oph.* My lord, he hath importuned me with love
In honorable fashion:

Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it. Go to, go to.

Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech,
my lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know, 115
 When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
 Lends the tongue vows. These blazes,
 daughter,
 Giving more light than heat, extinct in both
 Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
 You must not take for fire. From this time 120
 Be something scanter of your maiden pres-
 ence.

Set your entreatments at a higher rate
 Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
 Believe so much in him, that he is young,
 And with a larger tether may he walk 125
 Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,
 Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,
 Not of that dye which their investments show,
 But mere implorators of unholy suits,
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds, 130
 The better to beguile. This is for all:
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time
 forth.

Have you so much as any moment leisure,
 As to give words or talk with the Lord
 Hamlet.

Look to 't, I charge you. Come your ways. 135

Oph. I shall obey, my lord. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.

The platform.

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. Indeed? I heard it not. It then draws
near the season

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot
off, within.*]

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The King doth wake to-night and takes his
rouse,

Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring
reels;

Hor. And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish
down,

The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't,

But to my mind, though I am native here

Hor. And to the manner born, it is a custom

More honoured in the breach than the
observance.

This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduced and taxed of other
nations.

They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish
phrase

Soil our addition; and indeed it takes 20
From our achievements, though performed at
height,

The pith and marrow of our attribute.

So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious mole of nature in
them,

As, in their birth—wherein they are not 25
guilty,

Since nature cannot choose his origin—

By the o'ergrowth of some complexion

Oft breaking down the pales and forts of
reason,

Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens

The form of plausible manners, that these 30
men,

Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,

Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,—

Their virtues else—be they as pure as grace,

As infinite as man may undergo—

Shall in the general censure take corruption 35

From that particular fault. The dram of
eale

Doth all the noble substance often dout
To his own scandal.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Enter Ghost.

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

40 Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damned,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts
from hell,

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee
Hamlet,

45 King, father, royal Dane! O, answer me!
Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell
Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the
sepulchre,

Wherein we saw thee quietly inurned,
50 Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete
steel

Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature
55 So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our
souls?

Say, why is this? Wherefore? What should
we do?

[*Ghost beckons Hamlet.*

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action 60
It waves you to a more removed ground.
But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee, 65
And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself?
It waves me forth again. I'll follow it.

Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my
lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff 70
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of
reason
And draw you into madness? Think of it.
The very place puts toys of desperation, 75
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still.
Go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands. 80

Hor. Be ruled; you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.
Still am I called. Unhand me, gentlemen.
85 By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets
me!

I say, away! Go on, I'll follow thee.

[Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.]

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow. 'T is not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after. To what issue will this come?

90 *Mar.* Something is rotten in the state of Den-
mark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.
[Exeunt.]

SCENE V.

Another part of the platform.

Enter Ghost and Hamlet.

Ham. Where wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go
no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,

When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing⁵
To what I shall unfold.

Ham. Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt
hear.

Ham. What?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain term to walk the night, 10
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. But that I am
forbid

To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word 15
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young
blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from
their spheres,

Thy knotted and combined locks to part
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine. 20
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love-

Ham. O God!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural²⁵
murder.

Ham. Murder!

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is,
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Ham. Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as
swift

30 As meditation or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat
weed

That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet,
hear.

35 'T is given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of
Denmark

Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abused; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
40 Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic soul!
My uncle!

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous
gifts,—

O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
45 So to seduce!—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity

That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage, and to decline 50
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!

But virtue, as it never will be moved,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of
heaven,

So lust, though to a radiant angel linked, 55
Will sate itself in a celestial bed

And prey on garbage.

But, soft! Methinks I scent the morning air.

Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon, 60

Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,

With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,

And in the porches of my ears did pour

The leperous distilment; whose effect

Holds such an enmity with blood of man 65

That swift as quicksilver it courses through

The natural gates and alleys of the body,

And with a sudden vigour it doth posset

And curd, like eager droppings into milk,

The thin and wholesome blood. So did it 70
mine,

And a most instant tetter barked about,

Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,

All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand

Of life, of crown, of queen, at once 75
dispatched;

Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head.

80 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
85 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught. Leave her to
heaven

And to those thorns that in her bosom
lodge,
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at
once!

The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
90 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.

Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me. [*Exit.*

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth!
What else?

And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold,
hold, my heart,

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
95 But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a
seat

In this distracted globe. Remember thee!

Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records.

All saws of books, all forms, all pressures 100
past,

That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmixed with baser matter. Yes, by heaven!
O most pernicious woman!

105

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables,—meet it is I set it down
That one may smile, and smile, and be a
villain;

At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark.

[Writing.

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my 110
word;

It is "Adieu, adieu! remember me."

I have sworn 't.

Mar. { [Within.] My lord, my lord!

Hor. }

Mar. [Within.] Lord Hamlet!

Hor. [Within.] Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it!

Mar. [Within.] Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

115

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, bird, come.

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?

Hor. What news, my lord?

Ham. O, wonderful!

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No, you'll reveal it.

220 *Hor.* Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you, then,—would heart of man
once think it?

But you'll be secret?

Hor. }
Mar. } Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all
Denmark

But he's an arrant knave.

125 *Hor.* There needs no ghost, my lord, come from
the grave
To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right, you are in the right.
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part;
You, as your business and desire shall point
you,

130 For every man hath business and desire,
Such as it is; and for my own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray. }

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my
lord.

Ham. I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;

135 Yes, faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision
here,

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you.

For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster 't as you may. And now, good 144
friends,

As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord? We will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen
to-night.

Hor. { My lord, we will not.
Mar. }

Ham. Nay, but swear 't.

Hor. In faith, 145
My lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord in faith.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear

Ham. Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? Art thou 150
there, truepenny?

Come on; you hear this fellow in the cellarage.
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen.
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear. 155

Ham. *Hic et ubique?* Then we'll shift our ground.
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword.
Never to speak of this that you have heard,

160 Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Well said, old mole! Canst work i' the
earth so fast?

A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good
friends.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous
strange!

165 *Ham.* And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth,
Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

But come;

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

170 How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on,

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumbered thus, or this head-
shake,

175 Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, an
if we would,"

Or "If we list to speak," or "There be, an if
they might,"

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me,—this not to do,

180 So grace and mercy at your most need help
you,

Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! [*They swear.*]

So, gentlemen,

With all my love I do commend me to you.

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do, to express his love and friending to
you,

God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in
together;

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.

The time is out of joint;—O cursed spite,

That ever I was born to set it right!

Nay, come, let's go together.

[*Exeunt.* 190]

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A room in Polonius's house.

Enter Polonius and Reynaldo.

Pol. Give him this money and these notes,
Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good
Reynaldo,

Before you visit him, to make inquiry

5 Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said, very well said. Look you,
sir,

Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris,
And how, and who, what means, and where
they keep,

What company, at what expense; and finding
10 By this encompassment and drift of question
That they do know my son, come you more
nearer

Than your particular demands will touch it.
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge
of him,

As thus, "I know his father and his friends,
And in part him." Do you mark this, ¹⁵
Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. "And in part him; but," you may say, "not
well.

But, if 't be he I mean, he's very wild,
Addicted so and so;" and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so ²⁰
rank

As may dishonor him,—take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrel- ²⁵
ling,

Drabbing; you may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. Faith, no, as you may season it in the
charge.

You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency. ³⁰
That's not my meaning. But breathe his
faults so quaintly

That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Rey.

But, my good lord,— ³⁵

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift,
And, I believe, it is a fetch of wit:

You laying these slight sullies on my son,

40 As 't were a thing a little soiled i' the
working,

Mark you,

Your party in converse, him you would sound,

Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes

The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured

45 He closes with you in this consequence;

"Good sir," or so, or "friend," or "gentle-
man,"

According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does he this—he does—what
50 was I about to say? By the mass, I was
about to say something. Where did I leave?

Rey. At "closes in the consequence," [at "friend
or so," and "gentleman."]

Pol. At "closes in the consequence," ay, marry.
He closes thus: "I know the gentleman.

55 I saw him yesterday, or th' other day,

Or then, or then, with such, or such; and,
as you say,

There was he gaming; there o'ertook in 's
rouse;

There falling out at tennis;" or perchance,
"I saw him enter such a house of sale,"

Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.

60

See you now

Your bait of falsehood take this carp of truth;
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out.

65

So by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you
not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. God buy ye; fare ye well.

Rey. Good my lord.

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.

70

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord.

Pol. Farewell! [*Exit Reynaldo.*]

Enter Ophelia.

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so
affrighted!

Pol. With what, i' the name of God?

75

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced,
No hat upon his head, his stockings fouled,
Ungartered, and down-gyved to his ancle,
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each
other,



And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know,
85 But truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
90 As he would draw it. Long stayed he so.
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and
down,

He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
95 And end his being. That done, he lets me
go;

And, with his head over his shoulder turned,
He seemed to find his way without his eyes,
For out o' doors he went without their
help,

And, to the last, bended their light on me.

100 *Pol.* Come, go with me, I will go seek the King.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
105 That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—

What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord, but, as you did command, I did repel his letters and denied His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad. I am sorry that with better heed and judgement 110 I had not quoted him: I feared he did but trifle

And meant to wrack thee; but beshrew my jealousy!

By heaven, it is as proper to our age To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions As it is common for the younger sort 115 To lack discretion. Come, go we to the King. This must be known, which, being kept close, might move

More grief to hide than hate to utter love.

Come. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A room in the castle.

Flourish. Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!

Moreover that we much did long to see you,

The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you
heard

5 Of Hamlet's transformation; so call it,
Since not the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be.
More than his father's death, that thus hath
put him

10 So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days brought up
with him

And since so neighboured to his youth and
haviour,

That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time; so by your companies

15 To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him
thus,

That, opened, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talked of
you;

20 And sure I am two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please
you

To show us so much gentry and good will
As to expend your time with us a while
For the supply and profit of our hope,
25 Your visitation shall receive such thanks

As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent 30
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guild-
enstern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosen-
crantz,

And I beseech you instantly to visit 35
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence and our
practices
Pleasant and helpful to him!

Queen. Ay, amen!

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some
Attendants.*]

Enter Polonius.

Pol. The ambassadors from Norway, my good 40
lord,
Are joyfully returned.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good
news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good
liege,

I hold my duty as I hold my soul,
Both to my God and to my gracious king.
And I do think, or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath used to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

50 *King.* O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the ambassadors.

My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them
in. [*Exit Polonius.*

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found

55 The head and source of all your son's
distemper.

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main,

His father's death and our o'erhasty marriage.

King. Well, we shall sift him.

Re-enter Polonius, with Voltimand and Cornelius.

Welcome, my good friends!

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother
Norway?

60 *Volt.* Most fair return of greetings and desires.

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies, which to him appeared
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack,
But, better looked into, he truly found
It was against your highness. Whereat
grieved,

That so his sickness, age, and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests

On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys,
 Receives rebuke from Norway, and in fine
 Makes vow before his uncle never more 70
 To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
 Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
 Gives him three thousand crowns in annual
 fee,

And his commission to employ those soldiers,
 So levied as before, against the Polack; 75
 With an entreaty, herein further shown,
 [Giving a paper.]

That it might please you to give quiet pass
 Through your dominions for this enterprise,
 On such regards of safety and allowance
 As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well; 80
 And at our more considered time we'll read,
 Answer, and think upon this business.
 Meantime we thank you for your well-took
 labour.

Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together.
 Most welcome home!

[Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.]

Pol. This business is well ended. 85
 My liege, and madam, to expostulate
 What majesty should be, what duty is,
 Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
 Were nothing but to waste night, day, and
 time.

Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit 90

And tediousness the limbs and outward
flourishes,

I will be brief. Your noble son is mad.
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.

That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis 'tis true. A foolish figure!
But farewell it, for I will use no art.

Mad let us grant him then; and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause.
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend.

I have a daughter—have while she is mine—
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this. Now gather, and
surmise. [*Reads.*

“To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most
beautified Ophelia,”—

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; “beautified”
is a vile phrase. But you shall hear. Thus:

“In her excellent white bosom, these, etc.”

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay awhile. I will be
faithful. [*Reads.*

"Doubt thou the stars are fire,
 Doubt that the sun doth move,
 Doubt truth to be a liar,
 But never doubt I love.

"O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers. I have 120
 not art to reckon my groans; but that I love
 thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.

Thine evermore, most dear lady,
 Whilst this machine is to him,

HAMLET." 125

This in obedience hath my daughter shown
 me,

And more above, hath his solicitings,
 As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
 All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
 Received his love?

Pol. What do you think of me? 130

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you
 think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,—
 As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
 Before my daughter told me—what might 135
 you,

Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
 If I had played the desk or table-book,
 Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,
 Or looked upon this love with idle sight,
 What might you think? No, I went round 140
 to work.

And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
“Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star.
This must not be;” and then I prescripts
gave her,
That she should lock herself from his resort,
Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed—a short tale to make—
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time—I'd fain know
that—

That I have positively said “'Tis so,”
When it proved otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. [*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*] Take
this from this, if this be otherwise.

If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours
together

Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him.

Be you and I behind an arras then.

Mark the encounter. If he love her not

And be not from his reason fallen thereon,

Let me be no assistant for a state,

But keep a farm and carters.

King.

We will try it.

Queen. But look where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away.

I'll board him presently.

[*Exeunt King, Queen, and Attendants.*

Enter Hamlet, reading.

O, give me leave, how does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, God-a-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord!

Ham. Ay, sir. To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter?

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun. Conception

is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to 't.

90 *Pol.* [*Aside.*] How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter. Yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone. And truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love; 195 very near this. I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

200 *Pol.* I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir; for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum and that they have 205 a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams; all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

310 *Pol.* [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.—Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave?

315 *Pol.* Indeed, that is out o' th' air. [*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which

reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting ²²⁰ between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You can not, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal,—²²⁵ [*Aside*] except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Pol. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet? There ²³⁰ he is.

Ros. [*To Polonius.*] God save you, sir!

[Exit Polonius.]

Guil. My honoured lord!

Ros. My most dear lord!

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost ²³⁵ thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do you both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not over-happy.

On Fortune's cap we are not the very button. ²⁴⁰

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours? . . . What's the news?

Ros. None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is doomsday near. But your news is not true. Let me question more in particular. What have you, my good friends,
250 deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord?

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

255 *Ros.* Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one, in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

Ros. We think not so, my lord.

260 *Ham.* Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison.

Ros. Why, then, your ambition makes it one. 'Tis too narrow for your mind.

265 *Ham.* O God, I could be bounded in a nut-shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the
270 shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Ros. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. Then are our beggars bodies, and our
275 monarchs and outstretched heroes the beg-

gars' shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Ros.)
Guil.) We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter. I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for, to speak to you ²⁸⁰ like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in ²⁸⁵ thanks, but I thank you; and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me. Come, come. Nay, speak. ²⁹⁰

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the ²⁹⁵ good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation ³⁰⁰ of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no!

305 *Ros.* [*Aside to Guil.*] What say you?

Ham. [*Aside.*] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.—If you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

310 *Ham.* I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with
315 my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o’erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appeareth nothing to me but a foul and
320 pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! In form and moving how express and admirable! In
325 action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god! The beauty of the world! The paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me,—no, nor woman neither,
330 though by your smiling you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said, “Man delights not me”?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in ³³⁵
man, what lenten entertainment the players
shall receive from you. We coted them on
the way, and hither are they coming, to offer
you service.

Ham. He that plays the king shall be welcome; ³⁴⁰
his majesty shall have tribute of me; the
adventurous knight shall use his foil and
target; the lover shall not sigh gratis; the
humorous man shall end his part in peace;
[the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs ³⁴⁵
are tickle o' the sere;] and the lady shall say
her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt
for 't. What players are they?

Ros. Even those you were wont to take such
delight in, the tragedians of the city. ³⁵⁰

Ham. How chances it they travel? Their res-
idence, both in reputation and profit, was
better both ways.

Ros. I think their inhibition comes by the means
of the late innovation. ³⁵⁵

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did
when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

Ros. No, indeed, are they not.

[*Ham.* How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

Ros. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted ³⁶⁰
pace; but there is, sir, an aery of children,
little eyases, that cry out on the top of ques-
tion, and are most tyrannically clapped for
't. These are now the fashion, and so

berattle the common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? Who maintains 'em? How are they escoted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? Will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players,—as it is most like, if their means are no better,—their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession?

Ros. Faith, there has been much to do on both sides, and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy. There was for a while no money bid for argument unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is't possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; Hercules and his load too.]

Ham. It is not very strange; for my uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. 398
Your hands, come then. The appurtenance
of welcome is fashion and ceremony. Let
me comply with you in this garb, lest my
extent to the players, which, I tell you,
must show fairly outward, should more 400
appear like entertainment than yours. You
are welcome; but my uncle-father and
aunt-mother are deceived.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west. When 405
the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a
handsaw.

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. [*Aside to them.*] Hark you, Guildenstern,
and you too, at each ear a hearer, that great 410
baby you see there is not yet cut of his
swadding-clouts.

Ros. Haply he is the second time come to them,
for they say an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the 415
players; mark it. [*Aloud.*] You say right,
sir. O' Monday morning; 'twas then indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you. When
Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon my honour,--

Ham. "Then came each actor on his ass,—"

425 *Pol.* The best actors in the world, either for
tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-
comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-histor-
ical, tragical - comical - historical - pastoral,
scene individable, or poem unlimited; Seneca
430 can not be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.
For the law of writ and the liberty, these are
the only men.

Ham. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a
treasure hadst thou!

435 *Pol.* What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why,

 'One fair daughter, and no more,
 The which he loved passing well."

Pol. [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter.

440 *Ham.* Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

Pol. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a
daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows, then, my lord?

445 *Ham.* Why,

 "As by lot, God wot,"

and then, you know,

 "It came to pass, as most like it was,"—

The first row of the pious chanson will show
450 you more, for look where my abridgement
comes.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters, welcome all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. O, my old friend! Thy face is valanced since I saw thee last; com'st thou ⁴⁵⁵ to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! By 'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be ⁴⁶⁰ not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't like French falconers—fly at any thing we see; we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate ⁴⁶⁵ speech.

First Play. What speech, my good lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once. For the play, I remember, pleased not ⁴⁷⁰ the million; 'twas caviare to the general. But it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgements in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty ⁴⁷⁵ as cunning. I remember, one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation; but called it an honest method, as wholesome ⁴⁸⁰

as sweet, and by very much more handsome
than fine. One speech in it I chiefly lov'd;
'twas Æneas's tale to Dido, and thereabout
of it especially where he speaks of Priam's
slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin
at this line: let me see, let me see—

"The rugged Phyrus, like the Hyrcanian beast,"
—'tis not so. It begins with Pyrrhus:—

"The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion
smeared

With heraldry more dismal. Head to foot
Now is he total gules, horribly tricked

With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their lords' murder. Roasted in wrath and
fire,

And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks."

So, proceed you.

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good
accent and good discretion.

First Play.

"Anon he finds him
Striking too short at Greeks. His antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal matched,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword

The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
 Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
 Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
 Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear; for, lo! his sword,
 Which was declining on the milky head 515
 Of reverend Priam, seemed i' the air to stick.
 So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood
 And like a neutral to his will and matter,
 Did nothing.
 But, as we often see, against some storm, 520
 A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
 The bold winds speechless and the orb below
 As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
 Doth rend the region, so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
 Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work; 525
 And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
 On Mars's armour forged for proof eterne
 With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
 Now falls on Priam.
 Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods, 530
 In general synod take away her power!
 Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
 And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven
 As low as to the fiends!"

Pol. This is too long. 535

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.
 Prithee, say on; he's for a jig or a tale of
 bawdry, or he sleeps.) Say on; come to
 Hecuba.

First Play. "But who, O, who, had seen the mobled 540
 queen—"

Ham. "The mobled queen"?

Pol. That's good; "mobled queen" is good.

First Play. "Run barefoot up and down, threatening
the flames

- 545 With bisson rheum, a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;—
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steeped,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced.
550 But if 'the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
Unless things mortal move them not at all,
555 Would have made milch the burning eyes of
heaven,
And passion in the gods."

Pol. Look, whe'er he has not turned his colour
and has tears in 's eyes. Prithee, no more.

- Ham.* 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest
560 of this soon. Good my lord, will you see
the players well bestowed? Do you hear?
Let them be well used, for they are the
abstract and brief chronicles of the time;
after your death you were better have a bad
565 epitaph than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their
desert.

- Ham.* God's bodykins, man, much better. Use
every man after his desert, and who shall
570 'scape whipping? Use them after your own
honour and dignity. The less they deserve,

the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

Pol. Come, sirs.

Ham. Follow him, friends; we'll hear a play ⁵⁷⁵
to-morrow. [*Exit Polonius with all the
Players but the First.*] Dost thou hear me,
old friend? Can you play *The Murder of
Gonzago*?

First Play. Ay, my lord.

580

Ham. We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could,
for a need, study a speech of some dozen or
sixteen lines, which I would set down and
insert in't, could you not?

First Play. Ay, my lord.

585

Ham. Very well. Follow that lord,—and look
you mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*]
My good friends, I'll leave you till night.
You are welcome to Elsinore.

Ros. Good my lord!

590

Ham. Ay, so, God buy ye. [*Exeunt Rosencrantz
and Guildenstern.*] Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous that this player here,

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

595

Could force his soul so to his own conceit

That from her working all his visage wanned,

Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,

A broken voice, and his whole function suiting

With forms to his conceit? And all for ⁶⁰⁰
nothing!

For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would
he do,

Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage
with tears

And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears.

Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life

A damned defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain, breaks my pate across,
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my
face,

Tweaks me by the nose, gives me the lie i'
the throat,

As deep as to the lungs, who does me this,
Ha!

'Swounds, I should take it; for it can not be
But I am pigeon-livered and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites

With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy
villain!

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless
villain!

O, vengeance!

Why, what an ass I am! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and 630
hell,

Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with
words,

And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,

A scullion!

Fie upon 't! Foh! About, my brain! I
have heard

That guilty creatures sitting at a play 635

Have by the very cunning of the scene

Been struck so to the soul that presently

They have proclaimed their malefactions.

For murder, though it have no tongue, will
speak

With most miraculous organ. I'll have these 640
players

Play something like the murder of my father

Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks

I'll tent him to the quick. If he but blench,

I know my course. The spirit that I have

seen

May be the Devil: and the Devil hath power 645

T' assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps

Out of my weakness and my melancholy,

As he is very potent with such spirits,

Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
More relative than this. The play's the
thing

Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.

[*Exit.*

to him
to him

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A room in the castle.

*Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia,
Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.*

King. And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess he feels himself distracted; 5
But from what cause he will by no means
speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be
sounded,

But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some con-
fession

Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well? 10

Ros. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him

5 To any pastime?

Ros. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way; of these we told
him,

And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it. They are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true.

And he beseeched me to entreat your
majesties

To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much
content me

To hear him so inclined.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Ros. We shall, my lord.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too,
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 't were by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia.

Her father and myself, [lawful espials,]
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.

And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness. So shall I hope your
virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit Queen.*]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so
please you,

We will bestow ourselves. [*To Ophelia.*]
Read on this book,

That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in
this,—

'Tis too much proved—that with devotion's
visage

And piety's action we do sugar o'er
The Devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true!

[*Aside.*] How smart a lash that speech doth
give my conscience!

The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering
art,

Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word.
O heavy burthen!

Pol. I hear him coming. Let's withdraw, my
lord. [*Exeunt King and Polonius.*]

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. To be, or not to be: that is the question.

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die; to
sleep;

No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural
shocks

That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wished. To die; to sleep;—
To sleep? Perchance to dream! Ay, there's
the rub;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may
come,

When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.

For who would bear the whips and scorns of
time,

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's
contumely,

The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bedkin? Who would fardels
bear,

To grunt and sweat under a weary life,

But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscovered country from whose bourn

No traveller returns, puzzles the will 80
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
★ And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, 85
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.—Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remembered.

Oph. Good my lord, 90

How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you, well, well, well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver.
I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I. 95

I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honoured lord, you know right well
you did,

And, with them, words of so sweet breath
composed

As made the things more rich. Their per-
fume lost,

Take these again; for to the noble mind 10
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord!

Ham. Are you fair?

Oph. What means your lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Oph. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

Ham. Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness. This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Oph. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believed me, for virtue can not so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it. I loved you not.

Oph. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery; why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Oph. At home, my lord.

125

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in 's own house. Farewell.

Oph. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this 140
plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go. Farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what 145
monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell.

Oph. O heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. I have heard of your paintings too, well enough. God hath given you one face, and 150
you make yourselves another. You jig, you amble, and you lisp, you nick-name God's creatures and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more 155
marriages. Those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [Exit.

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, 160
tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of
form,

The observed of all observers, quite, quite
down!

And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That sucked the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and
harsh;

That unmatched form and feature of blown
youth

Blasted with ecstasy. O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King and Polonius.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lacked form a
little,

Was not like madness. There's something
in his soul

O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger; which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination

Thus set it down: he shall with speed to
England,

For the demand of our neglected tribute.

Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel

This something-settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him
thus

From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well; but yet do I believe 188
 The origin and commencement of his grief
 Sprung from neglected love. How now,
 Ophelia!
 You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
 We heard it all. My lord, do as you please,
 But, if you hold it fit, after the play 190
 Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
 To show his grief. Let her be round with
 him,
 And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
 Of all their conference. If she find him not,
 To England send him, or confine him where 195
 Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so.
 Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.
[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

A hall in the castle.

Enter Hamlet and Players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say,

whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise. I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant. It out-herods Herod. Pray you, avoid it.

First Play. I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature. For any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 't were, the mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskillful laugh, can not but make the judicious grieve; the censure of the which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of

Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen⁴⁰ had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

First Player. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir:

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those⁴⁵ that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary⁵⁰ question of the play be then to be considered. That's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. [*Exeunt Players.*]

Enter Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

How now, my lord! Will the King hear⁵⁵ this piece of work?

Pol. And the Queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.

[*Exit Polonius.*]

Will you two help to hasten them?

Ros. } We will, my lord.
Guil. }

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

Ham. What ho! Horatio.

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord,—

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter,
For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the
poor be flattered?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost
thou hear?

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath sealed thee for herself; for thou hast
been

As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hath ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are
those

Whose blood and judgement are so well com-
mingled,

That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me
that man

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear
him

In my neart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the King.

One scene of it comes near the circumstance
 Which I have told thee of my father's death. 82
 I prithee, when thou seest that act a-foot,
 Even with the very comment of thy soul
 Observe my uncle. If his occulted guilt
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen, 90
 And my imaginations are as foul
 As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
 And after we will both our judgements join
 In censure of his seeming.

Hor.

Well, my lord. 95

If he steal aught the whilst this play is
 playing,

And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be
 idle.

Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter King, Queen,
 Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guild-
 enstern, and other Lords attendant, with
 the guard carrying torches.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet? 10

Ham. Excellent, i' faith,—of the chameleon's
 dish. I eat the air, promise-crammed. You
 can not feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet;
 these words are not mine. 10

Ham. No, nor mine now. [*To Polonius.*] My

lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

Pol. That did I, my lord, and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. What did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Caesar. I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord, they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive. [*Lying down at Ophelia's feet.*]

Pol. [*To the King.*] O, ho! do you mark that?...

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? For, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within 's two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long? Nay then, let the Devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year; but, by 'r lady, he must build churches then, or else shall he suffer not

thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, "For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot."

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.

Enter a King and a Queen very lovingly, the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up and declines his head upon her neck; lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner woos the Queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.

[Exeunt.]

Oph. What means this, my lord?

140

Ham. Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

Oph. Belike this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow. The players can not keep counsel, they'll tell all. . .

145 *Pro.* For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

[*Exit.*

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

150 *Ham.* As woman's love.

Enter two Players, King and Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone
round

Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrowed sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
155 Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
20 So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;
For women's fear and love hold quantity,
In neither aught, or in extremity.

65 Now, what my love is, proof hath made you
know;

And as my love is sized, my fear is so.

Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;

Where little fears grow great, great love grows
there.

P. King. 'Faith I must leave thee, love, and shortly
too.

70 My operant powers their functions leave to do;
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honored, beloved; and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou—

P. Queen.

O, confound the rest!

Such love must needs be treason in my breast!
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who killed the first.

Ham. [Aside.] Wormwood, wormwood.

P. Queen. The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love.
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

P. King. I do believe you think what now you speak,
But what we do determine oft we break.

Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.

Most necessary 'tis that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt.

What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.

The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves destroy.

Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.

This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes
change,

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.

The great man down, you mark his favorite flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies.

And hitherto doth love on fortune tend,
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,

And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy

But, orderly to end where I begun,

Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own.
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.
P. Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!
An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
Meet what I would have well and it destroy.
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now!

P King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here
awhile.

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*]

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain,
And never come mischance between us twain!
[*Exit.*]

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there
no offence in't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest.
No offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? 'Tropically.
This play is the image of a murder done in

Vienna. Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista. You shall see anon. 'Tis a knavish piece of work, but what o' that? Your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not. Let the galled jade wince, 246
our withers are unwrung.

Enter Lucianus.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Oph. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Ham. I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying. 245

Oph. You are keen, my lord, you are keen. . . .

Ham. Begin, murderer, leave thy damnable faces and begin. Come, "the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge."

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time 250
agreeing;

Confederate season, else no creature seeing.

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magic and dire property,

On wholesome life usurp immediately. 254

[Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.]

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate.
His name's Gonzago; the story is extant, and
written in very choice Italian. You shall see
anon how the murderer gets the love of
Gonzago's wife. 258

Oph. The King rises.

[Ham. What, frightened with false fire?]

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

³⁵ *King.* Give me some light. Away!

All. Lights, lights, lights!

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.*]

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play;

For some must watch, while some must
sleep.

Thus runs the world away.

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers—
if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with
me—with two Provincial roses on my razed
shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players,
⁵ sir?

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,

This realm dismantled was

⁰ Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

A very, very—pajock.

Hor. You might have rhymed.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word
for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

⁵ *Hor.* Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning?

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha! Come, some music! Come, the
recorders!

For if the king like not the comedy, 290

Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.

Come, some music!

Re-enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history. 295

Guil. The King, sir,—

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

Ham. With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, rather with choler. 300

Ham. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some 305 frame and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir; pronounce.

Guil. The Queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome. 310

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer I will do your mother's commandment; if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my 315 business.

Ham. Sir, I can not.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer. My wit's
20 diseased. But, sir, such answer as I can
make, you shall command, or, rather, as you
say, my mother. Therefore no more, but
to the matter. My mother, you say,—

Ros. Then thus she says: your behaviour hath
25 struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a
mother! But is there no sequel at the heels
of this mother's admiration? Impart.

Ros. She desires to speak with you in her closet
30 ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our
mother. Have you any further trade with
us?

Ros. My lord, you once did love me.

35 *Ham.* And do still, by these pickers and stealers.

Ros. Good my lord, what is your cause of
distemper? You do surely bar the door
upon your own liberty if you deny your
griefs to your friend.

40 *Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice
of the King himself for your succession in
Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but "While the grass grows,"—
45 the proverb is something musty.

Re-enter Players with recorders.

O, the recorders! Let me see one.—To
withdraw with you:—why do you go about

to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly. 350

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I can not.

Ham. I pray you. 355

Guil. Believe me, I can not.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. It is as easy as lying. Govern these vent-
ages with your fingers and thumb, give it 360
breath with your mouth, and it will discourse
most eloquent music. Look you, these are
the stops.

Guil. But these can not I command to any utter-
ance of harmony. I have not the skill. 365

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing
you make of me! You would play upon me,
you would seem to know my stops, you
would pluck out the heart of my mystery,
you would sound me from my lowest note to 370
the top of my compass; and there is much
music, excellent voice, in this little organ,
yet can not you make it speak. 'Sblood,
do you think I am easier to be played on
than a pipe? Call me what instrument you 375
will, though you can fret me, you cannot play
upon me.

Enter Polonius.

God bless you, sir.

380 *Pol.* My lord, the Queen would speak with you,
and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in
shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.

385 *Pol.* It is backed like a weasel.

Ham. Or like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then I will come to my mother by and by.

[*Aside.*] They fool me to the top of my
390 bent.—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so. [*Exit.*

Ham. "By and by" is easily said. Leave me,
friends. [*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself
breathes out

395 Contagion to this world. Now could I drink
hot blood,

And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my
mother.

O heart, lose not thy nature! Let not
ever

The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom;

400 Let me be cruel, not unnatural.

I will speak daggers to her, but use none.

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;
How in my words soever she be shent
To give them seals never, my soul, consent!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

A room in the castle.

Enter King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you.

I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you.
The terms of our estate may not endure 5
Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide.
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many, many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty. 10

Ros. The single and peculiar life is bound
With all the strength and armour of the mind
To keep itself from noyance, but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depends and rests
The lives of many. The cease of majesty 15
Dies not alone, but, like a gulf, doth draw

What's near it with it. It is a massy wheel,
Fixed on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser
things

20 Are mortised and adjoined; which, when it
falls,

Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the King sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy
voyage,

25 For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

Ros. }

Guil. }

We will haste us.

[*Exeunt Rosencraniz and Guildenstern.*
Enter Polonius.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process. I'll warrant she'll tax
him home;

30 And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a
mother,

Since nature makes them partial, should o'er-
hear

The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my
liege.

I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
35 And tell you what I know.

King.

Thanks, dear my lord.

[Exit Polonius.]

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will.
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent, 40
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed
hand

Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens 45
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves
mercy

But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardoned being down? Then I'll look up; 50
My fault is past. But, O, what form of
prayer

Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul
murder"?

That can not be; since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen. 55
May one be pardoned and retain the offence?
In the corrupted currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself

60 Buys out the law. But 'tis not so above.
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves com-
pelled,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? What
rests?

65 Try what repentance can. What can it
not?

Yet what can it when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make
assay!

70 Bow, stubborn knees, and, heart with strings
of steel,

Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!

All may be well. [*Retires and kneels.*

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying.
And now I'll do't.—And so he goes to heaven;
75 And so am I revenged. That would be
scanned.

A villain kills my father, and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
80 He took my father grossly, full of bread,
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as
May;

And how his audit stands who knows save
heaven?

But in our circumstance and course of thought
'Tis heavy with him. And am I then
revenged,

To take him in the purging of his soul, 85
When he is fit and seasoned for his passage?
No!

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid
hent.

When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed, 90
At game, a-swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't,—
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at
heaven,

And that his soul may be as damned and
black

As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays. 95
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.

[Exit.]

King. [Rising.] My words fly up, my thoughts
remain below.

Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.

*The Queen's closet.**Enter Queen and Polonius.*

Pol. He will come straight. Look you lay home to him.

Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,

And that your grace hath screened and stood between

Much heat and him. I'll silence me even here.

5 *Pray you, be round with him.*

Ham. [*Within.*] Mother, mother, mother.

Queen. I'll warrant you, fear me not. Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[Polonius hides behind the arras.

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now, mother, what's the matter?

10 *Queen.* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet!

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so. 17

You are the Queen, your husband's brother's
wife;

And—would it were not so!—you are my
mother.

Queen. Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can
speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down. You
shall not budge.

You go not till I set you up a glass 20

Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not
murder me?

Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind.*] What, ho! help, help, help!

Ham. [*Drawing.*] How now! A rat? Dead, 25
for a ducat, dead!

[*Makes a pass through the arras.*]

Pol. [*Behind.*] O, I am slain! [*Falls and dies.*]

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not. Is it the King?

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed! Almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother. 30

Queen. As kill a king!

Ham. Ay, lady. 'twas my word
[*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius.*]

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better. Take thy fortune.
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.
[*Drops the arras.*

35 Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! Sit
you down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall,
If it be made of penetrable stuff,
If damned custom have not brazed it so
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

40 *Queen.* What have I done, that thou dar'est wag
thy tongue

In noise so rude against me?

Ham.

Such an act

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love
45 And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths; O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words. Heaven's face does
glow,

50 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen.

Ay me, what act,

That roars so loud and thunders in the index?

55 *Ham.* Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

See, what a grace was seated on this brow.
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command,
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill, 60
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man.
This was your husband. Look you now
what follows:

Here is your husband, like a mildewed ear, ■
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you
eyes?

Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You can not call it love, for at your age
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble, 70
And waits upon the judgement; and what
judgement

Would step from this to this? Sense sure
you have,

Else could you not have motion; but sure,
that sense

Is apoplexed; for madness would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd 75
But it reserved some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil
was 't

That thus hath cozened you at hoodman-
blind?

80 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.

O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
85 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire. Proclaim no
shame

When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn
And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more!
90 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.

Ham. Nay, but to live—

Queen. O, speak to me no more!
These words like daggers enter in my ears.
95 No more, sweet Hamlet!

Ham. A murderer and a villain!
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
Of your precedent lord! A vice of kings!
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
00 And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more!

Ham. A king of shreds and patches,—

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your
gracious figure?

Queen. Alas, he's mad!

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide, 105
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

Ghost. Do not forget! This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose. 110
But, look, amazement on thy mother sits.
O, step between her and her fighting soul.
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works.
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you, 115
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with th' incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep,
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hairs, like life in excrements, 120
Start up and stand on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him, on him! Look you, how pale he
glares!

His form and cause conjoined, preaching to 125
stones,

Would make them capable. Do not look
upon me,

Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects; then what I have to do
Will want true colour, tears perchance for
blood.

130 *Queen.* To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all, yet all that is I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! Look, - how it
steals away!

My father, in his habit as he lived!

135 Look, where he goes, even now, out at the
portal! *[Exit Ghost.]*

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain.
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep
time,

140 And makes as healthful music. It is not
madness

That I have uttered. Bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word, which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of
grace,

145 Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness
speaks.

It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,

Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,
And do not spread the compost on the weeds, 1
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my
virtue,

For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

Queen. O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in
twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night; but go not to my uncle's bed.
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat, 1
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of
nature,

And either . . . the devil or throw him out,
With wondrous potency. Once more, good
night;

And when you are desirous to be blessed,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,

[*Pointing to Polonius.*]

I do repent; but heaven hath pleased it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good
night.

I must be cruel, only to be kind.
Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloated king tempt you again to bed,
Pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his
mouse,

And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damned
fingers,

Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him
know;

For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,
Such dear concernings hide? Who would do
so?

No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
Let the birds fly, and like the famous ape,
To try conclusions, in the basket creep,
And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assured, if words be made of
breath,

And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack, 200

I had forgot. 'Tis so concluded on.

Ham. There's letters sealed, and my two school-
fellows,

Whom I will trust as I will adders fanged,
They bear the mandate. They must sweep
my way,

And marshal me to knavery. Let it work, 205

For 'tis the sport to have the engineer

Hoist with his own petar; and 't shall go
hard

But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most
sweet,

When in one line two crafts directly meet. 210

This man shall set me packing.

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.

Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most
grave,

Who was in life a foolish prating knave. 215

Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.

Good night, mother.

[*Exeunt severally, Hamlet dragging in*
Polonius.

ACT IV

SCENE I.

A room in the castle.

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves.

You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them.

Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

5 Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen to-night?

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend

Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
10 Whips out his rapier, cries, "A rat, a rat!"
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there.
His liberty is full of threats to all,
15 To you yourself, to us, to every one.

Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answered?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrained, and out
of haunt,

This mad young man. But so much was
our love,

We would not understand what was most fit, 20
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath killed,
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore 25
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude, come away!

The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence, and this vile deed 30
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guild-
enstern!

Re-enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Friends both, go join you with some further
aid.

Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragged 35
him.

Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the
body

Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest
friends

And let them know both what we mean to do
And what's untimely done; [so, haply,
slander]

Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poisoned shot, may miss our
name,

And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Another room in the castle.

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Safely stowed. But soft—

[*Ros.* } [*Within.*] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!]
[*Guil.* }

Ham. What noise? Who calls on Hamlet? O,
here they come.

Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the
dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis, that we make take it
thence

And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel and not mine ¹⁰
own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!
What replication should be made by the son
of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir, that soaks up the King's counte- ¹⁵
nance, his rewards, his authorities. But such
officers do the King best service in the end.
He keeps them, as an ape doth nuts, in the
corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last
swallowed. When he needs what you have ²⁰
gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and,
sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it. A knavish speech sleeps
in a foolish ear. 25

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is,
and go with us to the King.

Ham. The body is with the King, but the King is
not with the body. The King is a thing—

Guil. A thing, my lord! 30

Ham. Of nothing. Bring me to him. [Hide
fox, and all after.] [Exeunt.]

SCENE III.

Another room in the castle.

Enter King, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.

How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him.

He's loved of the distracted multitude,
5 Who like not in their judgement, but their eyes,

And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weighed,

But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,

This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause. Diseases desperate grown

10 By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all.

Enter Rosencrantz.

How now! What hath befallen?

Ros. Where the dead body is bestowed, my lord,
we cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord, guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

15

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter Hamlet and Guildenstern.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper! Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten. 20

A certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet. We fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but 25 variable service, two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath 30 fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

35

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see. If your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby. 40

King. Go seek him there. [*To some Attendants.*]

Ham. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—

Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve

5 For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence

With fiery quickness; therefore prepare thyself.

The bark is ready, and the wind at help,

The associates tend, and every thing is bent

For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

50 *King.* So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub that sees them. But, come, for England! Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

55 *Ham.* My mother. Father and mother is man and wife, man and wife is one flesh, and so, my mother. Come, for England! [*Exit.*]

King. Follow him at foot, tempt him with speed aboard.

Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night.

Away! for every thing is sealed and done

60 That else leans on the affair. Pray you, make haste.

[*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*]

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,—

As my great power thereof may give thee sense,

Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us—thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process, which imports at full,
By letters congruing to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it,
England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis
done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.
[Exit.]

to here
SCENE IV.

A plain in Denmark.

*Enter Fortinbras, a Captain, and Soldiers,
marching.*

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king.
Tell him that, by his license, Fortinbras
Craves the conveyance of a promised march
Over his kingdom. You know the ren-
dezvous.

If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;
And let him know so.

Cap.

I will do 't, my lord.

For. Go softly on.

[*Exeunt Fortinbras and Soldiers.*

*Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern,
and others.*

Ham. Good sir, whose powers are these?

10 *Cap.* They are of Norway, sir.

Ham. How purposed, sir, I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, sir?

Cap. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

15 *Ham.* Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,

We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.

20 To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, 'tis already garrisoned.

25 *Ham.* Two thousand souls and twenty thousand
ducats

Will not debate the question of this straw.

This is the imposthume of much wealth and
peace,

That inward breaks, and shows no cause with-
out

Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

30 *Cap.* God buy you, sir. [*Exit.*

Ros. Will 't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before. *[Exeunt all except Hamlet.]*

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge? What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more. ³⁵
Sure, he that made us with such large
discourse,

Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple ⁴⁰
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought which, quartered, hath but one
part wisdom

And ever three parts coward,—I do not know
Why yet I live to say, "This thing's to do,"
Sith I have cause and will and strength and ⁴⁵
means

To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort me;
Witness this army of such mass and charge
Led by a delicate and tender prince,
Whose spirit with divine ambition puffed
Makes mouths at the invisible event, ⁵⁰
Exposing what is mortal and unsure
To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw ⁵⁵
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,

That have a father killed, a mother stained,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep, while to my shame I see
60 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
That for a fantasy and trick of fame
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough and continent
65 To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!
[Exit.

SCENE V.

Elsinore. A room in the castle.

Enter Queen, Horatio, and a Gentleman.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gent. She is importunate, indeed distract.

Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have?

Gent. She speaks much of her father; says she
hears

5 There's tricks i' the world, and hems, and
beats her heart,

Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in
doubt

That carry but half sense. Her speech is
nothing,

Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection. They aim at it
And botch the words up fit to their own ¹⁰
thoughts;

Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures
yield them,

Indeed would make one think there might be
thought,

Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Hor. 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she
may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds. ¹⁵

Let her come in. *[Exit Gentleman.]*

Queen. *[Aside.]* To my sick soul, as sin's true
nature is,

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:

So full of artless jealousy is guilt,

. It spills itself in fearing to be spilt. ²⁰

Re-enter Gentleman with Ophelia.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Den-
mark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia!

Oph. *[Sings.]* How should I your true love know
From another one?

By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon. ²⁵

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this
song?

Oph. Say you? Nay, pray you, mark.

[*Sings.*] He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf
At his heels a stone.

Oh, oh!

Queen. Nay, but, Ophelia,—

35 *Oph.* Pray you, mark.

[*Sings.*] White his shroud as the mountain snow,—
Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

Oph. [*Sings.*] Larded with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did go
40 With true-love showers.

King. How do you, pretty lady?

Oph. Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was
a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we
are, but know not what we may be. God be
45 at your table!

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray you, let's have no words of this, but
when they ask you what it means, say you
this:

[*Sings.*] To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.

.

55 *King.* How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope all will be well. We must be patient;

but I can not choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it; and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, 60 ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night. [*Exit.*]

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit Horatio.*]

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs 65 All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,

But in battalions. First, her father slain; Next, your son gone; and he most violent author

Of his own just remove; the people muddied, 70 Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,

For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly

In hugger-mugger to inter him; poor Ophelia Divided from herself and her fair judgement, Without the which we are pictures, or mere 75 beasts;

Last, and as much containing as all these, Her brother is in secret come from France, Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds, And wants not buzzers to infect his ear With pestilent speeches of his father's death, 80

Wherein necessity, of matter beggared,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places

85 Gives me superfluous death. [*A noise within.*

[*Queen.* Alack, what noise is this?]

King. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard
the door.

Enter a Gentleman.

What is the matter?

Gent. Save yourself, my lord!

The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
90 Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him
lord;

And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
(The ratifiers and props of every word,)

25 They cry "Choose we! Laertes shall be
king!"

Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the
clouds,

"Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!"

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!

O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

100 *King.* The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*

Enter Laertes, armed; Danes following.

Laer. Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all
without.

Danes. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

Danes. We will, we will.

[*They retire without the door.*]

Laer. I thank you; keep the door. O thou vile king,

Give me my father!

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes. 105

[*Laying hold of him.*]

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims
me bastard,

Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched
brows

Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like? 110

Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person.

There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,

Why thou art thus incensed. Let him go, 115
Gertrude.

Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled
with.

120 To hell, allegiance! Vows, to the blackest
devil!

Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged

125 Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

Laer. My will, not all the world.

And for my means, I'll husband them so
well,

They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty

130 Of your dear father's death, is 't writ in your
—revenge

That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend
and foe,

Winner and loser?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my
arms,

135 And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak

Like a good child and a true gentleman.

That I am guiltless of your father's death,

And am most sensibly in grief for it,

140 It shall as level to your judgement pierce

As day does to your eye.

Danes. [*Within.*]

Let her come in.

Laer. How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter Ophelia.

O heat, dry up my brains! Tears seven times
salt,

Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid with 145
weight,

Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!

Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!

O heavens! is 't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?

[Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine, 150

It sends some precious instance of itself

After the thing it loves.]

Oph. [*Sings.*] They bore him barefaced on the bier:

[Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;]

And in his grave rained many a tear,— 155

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade
revenge,

It could not move thus.

Oph. [*Sings.*] You must sing a-down a-down,

And you call him a-down-a. 160

O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false
steward, that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;

165 pray you, love, remember; and there is
pansies, that's for thoughts.

Laer. A document in madness, thoughts and
remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines;
170 there's rue for you, and here's some for me;
we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays. O,
you must wear your rue with a difference.
There's a daisy. I would give you some
violets, but they withered all when my father
180 died. They say he made a good end,—

[*Sings.*] For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laer. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Oph. [*Sings.*] And will he not come again?

185 And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead;

Go to thy death-bed;

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

190 All flaxen was his poll.

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan.

God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, [I pray God.]

God buy you. [*Exit.*]

90 *Laer.* Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,

Make choice of whom your wisest friends you
will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and
me.

If by direct or by collateral hand 195
They find us touched, we will our kingdom
give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul 200
To give it due content.

Laer. Let this be so.

His means of death, his obscure funeral—
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his
bones,

No noble rite nor formal ostentation—

Cry to be heard, as 't were from heaven to 205
earth,

That I must call 't in question.

King. So you shall;

And where the offence is let the great axe fall.

I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

Another room in the castle.

Enter Horatio and a servant.

Hor. What are they that would speak with me?

Serv. Sea-faring men, sir. They say they have letters for you.

Hor. Let them come in. *[Exit Servant.]*

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

First Sail. God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

First Sail. He shall, sir, an 't please him. There's a letter for you, sir—it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England—
if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Hor. *[Reads.]* "Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the King; they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them. On the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did. I am to do a good turn for them. Let the King have the letters I have sent, and repair thou to me with as

much speed as thou wouldest fly death. I have 25
words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb,
yet are they much too light for the bore of the
matter. These good fellows will bring thee where
I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their
course for England; of them I have much to tell 30
thee. Farewell.

“He that thou knowest thine, *Hamlet.*”

Come, I will make you way for these your
letters;

And do 't the speedier, that you may direct
me

To him from whom you brought them. 35

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

Another room in the castle.

Enter King and Laertes.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance
seal.

And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Laer. It well appears. But tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature.

As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirred up.

King. O, for two special reasons,

10 Which may to you, perhaps, seem much
unsinewed,

But yet to me they're strong. The Queen
his mother

Lives almost by his looks; and for myself—
My virtue or my plague, be it either which—
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,

15 That, as the star moves not but in his
sphere,

I could not but by her. The other motive

Why to a public count I might not go,

Is the great love the general gender bear
him;

Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,

20 Would, like the spring that turneth wood to
stone,

Convert his gyves to graces; so that my
arrows,

Too slightly timbered for so loud a wind,

Would have reverted to my bow again,

And not where I had aimed them.

25 *Laer.* And so have I a noble father lost,

A sister driven into desperate terms,

Whose worth, if praises may go back again,

Stood challenger on mount of all the age

For her perfections. But my revenge will
come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that. You must ³⁰
not think

That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with
danger

And think it pastime. You shortly shall
hear more.

I loved your father, and we love ourself,
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine— ³⁵

Enter a Messenger with Letters.

[How now! What news?

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet.]

This to your majesty; this to the Queen.

King. From Hamlet! Who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them not.

They were given me by Claudio. He received ⁴⁰
them

Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.

Leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*]

[*Reads.*] “High and mighty, You shall know I am set
naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg
leave to see your kingly eyes, when I shall, first ⁴⁵
asking your pardon thereunto, recount the
occasion of my sudden [and more strange] return.
Hamlet.”

What should this mean? Are all the rest
come back?

Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. "Naked!"
And in a postscript here, he says "alone."
Can you advise me?

55 *Laer.* I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come.
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
"Thus didest thou."

King. If it be so, Laertes—
As how should it be so? How otherwise?—
60 Will you be ruled by me?

Laer. Ay, my lord,
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now
returned,

As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
65 To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall
breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the
practice
And call it accident.

Laer. My lord, I will be ruled;
70 The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
You have been talked of since your travel
much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality

Wherein, they say, you shine. Your sum of
parts

Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears 80
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two
months since,

Here was a gentleman of Normandy;—
I've seen myself, and served against, the
French,

And they can well on horseback; but this 85
gallant

Had witchcraft in 't. He grew unto his seat,
And to such wondrous doing brought his
horse,

As had he been incorpsed and demi-natured
With the brave beast. So far he topped my
thought,

That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks, 90
Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was 't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamond.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well. He is the brooch indeed

95 And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you,
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence
And for your rapier most especial,
100 That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you. The scrimers of
their nation,

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy

105 That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this—

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?

Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,

110 A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your
father,

But that I know love is begun by time,

And that I see, in passages of proof,

Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.

115 There lives within the very flame of love

A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it,

And nothing is at a like goodness still.

For goodness, growing to a plurisy,

Dies in his own too much. That we would
do,

We should do when we would; for this¹²⁰
“would” changes

And hath abatements and delays as many
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this “should” is like a spendthrift
sigh,

That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o’
the ulcer:—

Hamlet comes back. What would you¹²⁵
undertake,

To show yourself your father’s son in deed
More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i’ the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctua-
rize;

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good
Laertes,

Will you do this, keep close within your¹³⁰
chamber?

Hamlet returned shall know you are come
home.

We’ll put on those shall praise your excellence
And set a double varnish on the fame

The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine
together

And wager on your heads. He, being remiss,¹³⁵

Most generous and free from all contriving,

Will not peruse the foils, so that, with ease,

Or with a little shuffling, you may choose

A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice

140 Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do 't;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
145 Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from
death
That is but scratched withal. I'll touch my
point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him
slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this,

150 Weigh what convenience both of time and
means
, May fit us to our shape. If this should
fail,
And that our drift look through our bad per-
formance,
'T were better not assayed; therefore this
project
Should have a back or second; that might
hold
155 If this did blast in proof. Soft! let me see.
We'll make a solemn wager on your
cunnings,—
I ha't!
When in your motion you are hot and dry—

As make your bouts more violent to that
end—

And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared 160
him

A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there. But stay,
what noise?

Enter Queen.

[How now, sweet queen!]

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow. Your sister's drowned, 165
Laertes.

Laer. Drowned! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long 170
purples

That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call
them;

There, on the pendant boughs her coronet
weeds

Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself 175
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes
spread wide,

And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her
up;

Which time she chanted snatches of old
tunes,

180 As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element. But long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious
lay
To muddy death.

Laer. Alas, then, she is drowned?

185 *Queen.* Drowned, drowned.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears. But yet
It is our trick. Nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will; when these are
gone,

190 The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord;
I have a speech of fire that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude.

How much I had to do to calm his rage!

Now fear I this will give it start again,

195 Therefore let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A churchyard.

Enter two Clowns, with spades and pickaxes.

First Clo. Is she to be buried in Christian burial when she wilfully seeks her own salvation?

Sec. Clo. I tell thee she is, therefore make her grave straight. The crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

First Clo. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

Sec. Clo. Why, 't is found so.

First Clo. It must be "*se offendendo*," it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three branches; it is, to act, to do, and to perform; argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

Sec. Clo. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver,— 15

First Clo. Give me leave. Here lies the water; good. Here stands the man; good. If the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes,—mark you that; but if the water come to him and drown him, 20

he drowns not himself; argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

Sec. Clo. But is this law?

25 *First Clo.* Ay, marry, is 't; crowner's quest law.

Sec. Clo. Will you ha' the truth on 't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

30 *First Clo.* Why, there thou say'st; and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they
35 hold up Adam's profession.

Sec. Clo. Was he a gentleman?

First Clo. A was the first that ever bore arms.

[*Sec. Clo.* Why, he had none.

First Clo. What, art a heathen? How dost thou
40 understand the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digged; could he dig without arms?] I'll put another question to thee. If thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

45 *Sec. Clo.* Go to.

First Clo. What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

Sec. Clo. The gallows-maker; for that frame
50 outlives a thousand tenants.

First Clo. I like thy wit well, in good faith.
The gallows does well; but how does it well?
It does well to those that do ill. Now, thou
dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger
than the church, argal, the gallows may do 55
well to thee. To't again, come.

Sec. Clo. "Who builds stronger than a mason, a
sn.pwright, or a carpenter?"

First Clo. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

Sec. Clo. Marry, now I can tell. 60

First Clo. To 't.

Sec. Clo. Mass, I cannot tell.

Enter Hamlet and Horatio, at a distance.

First Clo. Cudgel thy brains no more about it,
for your dull ass will not mend his pace with
beating; and, when you are asked this ques- 65
tion next, say "a grave-maker"; the houses
that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get
thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[*Exit Sec. Clown.*

[*He digs, and sings.*

In youth, when I did love, did love,

Methought it was very sweet, 70

To contract, O, the time for-a my behove,

O, methought, there-a was nothing-a meet.

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business,
that he sings at grave-making?

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of 75
easiness.

Ham. 'T is e'en so. The hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

First Clo. [*Sings.*]

But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath clawed me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.

[*Throws up a skull.*]

Ham. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once. How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier, which could say "Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, sweet lord?" This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so; and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see 't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding, but to play at loggats with 'em? Mine ache to think on 't.

First Clo. [*Sings.*]

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade
For and a shrouding sheet;
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

100

[*Throws up another skull.*]

Ham. There's another. Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer ¹¹⁰ this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in 's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, ¹¹⁵ his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries. [Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries,] to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? Will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones ¹²⁰ too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will scarcely lie in this box, and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

120

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow.

Whose grave's this, sirrah?

120

First Clo. Mine, sir.

[*Sings.*] O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

Ham. I think it be thine indeed, for thou liest in 't

135 *First Clo.* You lie out on 't, sir, and therefore it
is not yours. For my part, I do not lie in 't,
yet it is mine.

Ham. Thou dost lie in 't, to be in 't and say it is
thine. 'T is for the dead, not for the quick,
140 therefore thou liest.

First Clo. 'T is a quick lie, sir, 't will away again,
from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

First Clo. For no man, sir.

145 *Ham.* What woman, then?

First Clo. For none, neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in 't?

First Clo. One that was a woman, sir; but, rest
her soul, she's dead.

150 *Ham.* How absolute the knave is! We must
speak by the card, or equivocation will undo
us. By the Lord, Horatio, this three years I
have taken note of it; the age is grown so
picked that the toe of the peasant comes so
near the heel of the courtier, he galls his
kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-
maker?

First Clo. Of all the days i' the year, I came to
't that day that our last king Hamlet o'er-
came Fortinbras.

160 *Ham.* How long is that since?

First Clo. Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that. It was that very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England. 165

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

First Clo. Why, because a was mad. A shall recover his wits there; or, if a do not, it's no great matter there.

Ham. Why? 170

First Clo. 'T will not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

First Clo. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How "strangely"? 175

First Clo. Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

• *First Clo.* Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he 180
rot?

First Clo. I' faith, if a be not rotten before a die . . . a will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another? 185

First Clo. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade that a will keep out water a great while, and your water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty 190
years.

Ham. Whose was it?

First Clo. A mad fellow's it was. Whose do you think it was?

195 *Ham.* Nay, I know not.

First Clo. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! A poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the King's jester.

200 *Ham.* This?

First Clo. E'en that.

Ham. [Let me see.] [*Takes the skull.*] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He
205 hath borne me on his back a thousand times. And now how abhorred in my imagination it is! My gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now, your gambols, your
210 songs, your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? Quite chop-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch
215 thick, to this favour she must come. Make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this
220 fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? Pah!

[*Puts down the skull.*]

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio!
Why may not imagination trace the noble²²⁵
dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a
bung-hole?

Hor. 'T were to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him²³⁰
thither with modesty enough and likelihood
to lead it; as thus: Alexander died, Alexander
was buried, Alexander returneth to dust, the
dust is earth, of earth we make loam, and
why of that loam, whereto he was converted,²³⁵
might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Caesar, dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.

O, that that earth, which kept the world in
awe,

Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!²⁴⁰

But soft! but soft! Aside! Here comes the
King,

*Enter Priests, etc., in procession; the Corpse of
Ophelia, Laertes and Mourners following;
King, Queen, their trains, etc.*

The Queen, the courtiers. Who is this they
follow?

And with such maimed rites? This doth
betoken

45 The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo it own life. 'T' was of some estate.

Couch we awhile, and mark.

[Retiring with Horatio.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes, a very noble youth.
Mark.

50 *Laer.* What ceremony else?

First Priest. Her obsequies have been as far
enlarged

As we have warranty. Her death was
doubtful;

And, but that great command o'ersways the
order,

5 She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown
on her.

Yet here she is allowed her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing
home

Of bell and burial.

60 *Laer.* Must there no more be done?

First Priest. No more be done.

We should profane the service of the dead

To sing a requiem and such rest to her

As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' the earth,

285 *Laer.* The devil take thy soul!

[*Grappling with him.*]

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.

I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat,
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear. Hold off thy
hand.

290 *King.* Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,—

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

*The Attendants part them, and they come out of
the grave.*

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son, what theme?

95 *Ham.* I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for
her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

00 *Ham.* 'Swounds, show me what thou 'lt do.

Woo 't weep? Woo 't fight? Woo 't fast?

Woo 't tear thyself?

Woo 't drink up eisel? Eat a crocodile?

I'll do 't. Dost thou come here to whine?

To outface me with leaping in her grave?

5 Be buried quick with her, and so will I.

And, if thou prate of mountains, let them
throw

Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou 'lt
mouth,

I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness, 310

And thus a while the fit will work on him
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
His silence will sit drooping.

Ham. Hear you, sir,

What is the reason that you use me thus? 315

I loved you ever. But it is no matter.

Let Hercules himself do what he may,

The cat will mew and dog will have his day.

[*Exit.*

King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[*Exit Horatio.*

[*To Laertes.*] Strengthen your patience in our 320
last night's speech;

We'll put the matter to the present push.

Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.

This grave shall have a living monument.

An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;

Till then, in patience our proceeding be. 325

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

A hall in the castle.

Enter Hamlet and Horatio.

Ham. So much for this, sir; now shall you see
the other.

You do remember all the circumstance?

Hor. Remember it, my lord!

Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of
fighting,

5 That would not let me sleep. Methought I
lay

Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.

Rashly,—

And praised be rashness for it; let us know
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well
When our deep plots do pall; and that should
learn us

10 There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,—

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,

My sea-gown scarfed about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them; had my desire;
15 Fingered their packet; and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again, making so bold,

My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found,
Horatio,—

O royal knavery!—an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons 20
Importing Denmark's health and England's
too,

With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible? 25

Ham. Here's the commission; read it at more
leisure.

But wilt thou hear now how I did proceed?

Hor. I beseech you.

Ham. Being thus be-netted round with villanies,—
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains, 30
They had begun the play—I sat me down,
Devis'd a new commission, wrote it fair.
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and laboured much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now 35
It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the King,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might 40
flourish,

As peace should still her wheaten garland
wear

And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like *as-es* of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these
contents,

45 Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving time allowed.

Hor. How was this sealed?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.

I had my father's signet in my purse,

50 Which was the model of that Danish seal,
Folded the writ up in the form of the other,
Subscribed it, gave 't the impression, placed
it safely,

The changeling never known. Now, the
next day

Was our sea-fight; and what to this was
sequent

55 Thou know'st already.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.

Ham. Why, man, they did make love to this
employment;

They are not near my conscience. Their
defeat

Does by their own insinuation grow.

60 'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now
upon—

He that hath killed my king and whored my
mother,

Popped in between the election and my⁶⁵
hopes,

Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage—is 't not perfect
conscience,

To quit him with this arm? And is 't not to
be damned,

To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil? 70

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from
England

What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short; the interim is mine,
And a man's life's no more than to say
“One.”

But I am very sorry, good Horatio, 75
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his. I'll court his favours.
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace! who comes here? 80

Enter Osr.

Osr. Your lordship is right welcome back to
Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir.—Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious, for 'tis a
85 vice to know him. He hath much land, and fertile; let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the King's mess. 'Tis a chough, but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

90 *Osr.* Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit. Your bonnet to his right use; 'tis
85 for the head.

Osr. I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

100 *Ham.* But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot, or my complexion—

Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,—as 't were,—I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that
105 he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter,—

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*]

Osr. Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court

Laertes, believe me, an absolute gentleman, ¹¹⁰
full of most excellent differences, of very soft
society and great showing; indeed, to speak
feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar
of gentry, for you shall find in him the con-
tinent of what part a gentleman would see. ¹¹⁵

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in
you; though, I know, to divide him in-
ventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of
memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect
of his quick sail. But, in the verity of ¹²⁰
extolment, I take him to be a soul of great
article; and his infusion of such dearth and
rareness, as, to make true diction of him,
his semblable is his mirror; and who else
would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more. ¹²⁵

Osr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? Why do we wrap
the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osr. Sir?

Hor. Is 't not possible to understand in another ¹³⁰
tongue? You will do 't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentle-
man?

Osr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already. All's golden ¹³⁵
words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Osr. I know you are not ignorant—

Ham. I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you

140 did, it would not much approve me. Well,
sir?

Osr. You are not ignorant of what excellence
Laertes is—

Ham. I dare not confess that, lest I should com-
145 pare with him in excellence; but, to know a
man well, were to know himself.

Osr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the
imputation laid on him by them, in his meed
he's unfellowed.

150 *Ham.* What's his weapon?

Osr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons; but well.

Osr. The King, sir, hath waged with him six
Barbary horses, against the which he has
155 imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers
and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle,
hanger, and so. Three of the carriages, in
faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive
to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of
160 very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew you must be edified by the margent
ere you had done.

Osr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

165 *Ham.* The phrase would be more germane to the
matter, if we could carry a cannon by our
sides; I would it might be hangers till then.
But, on: six Barbary horses against six
French swords, their assigns, and three

liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French 170
bet against the Danish. Why is this
"imponed," as you call it?

Osr. The King, sir, hath laid, sir, that in a dozen
passes between yourself and him, he shall not
exceed you three hits; he hath laid on twelve 175
for nine; and it would come to immediate
trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the
answer.

Ham. How if I answer no?

Osr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your 180
person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall; if it
please his majesty, it is the breathing time of
day with me. Let the foils be brought, the
gentleman willing, and the King hold his 185
purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not,
I will gain nothing but my shame and the
odd hits.

Osr. Shall I redeliver you e'en so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your 190
nature will.

Osr. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Ham. Yours, yours. [*Exit Osr.*] He does well to
commend it himself; there are no tongues
else for 's turn.

Hor. This lapwing runs away with the shell on
his head.

Ham. He did comply with his dug, before he
sucked it. Thus has he, and many more of

200 the same breed that I know the drossy age
dotes on, only got the tune of the time and
outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty
collection, which carries them through and
through the most fond and winnowed
205 opinions; and do but blow them to their
trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to
you by young Osric, who brings back to him,
that you attend him in the hall. He sends
210 to know if your pleasure hold to play with
Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes; they follow
the King's pleasure. If his fitness speaks,
mine is ready, now or whensoever, provided I
215 be so able as now.

Lord. The King and Queen and all are coming
down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The Queen desires you to use some gentle
220 entertainment to Laertes before you fall to
play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*]

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into
225 France, I have been in continual practice. I
shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst
not think how ill all's here about my heart.
But it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord,—

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of ²³⁴
gain-giving, as would perhaps trouble a
woman.

Hor. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it. I
will forestall their repair hither, and say you
are not fit. 235

Ham. Not a whit; we defy augury. There is
special providence in the fall of a sparrow.
If it be now, 't is not to come; if it be not to
come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it
will come; the readiness is all. Since no ²⁴⁰
man knows aught of what he leaves, what
is 't to leave betimes? Let be.

*Enter King, Queen, Laertes, Lords, Osric, and
Attendants with foils and gauntlets; a table
and flagons of wine on it.*

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand
from me.

[The King puts Laertes's hand into Hamlet's.]

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir. I've done you ²⁴⁵
wrong,

But pardon 't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am
punished

With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and excep- ²⁵⁰
tion

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was 't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never
Hamlet!

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he's not himself does wrong
Laertes,

255 Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness. If 't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,
260 Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
Free me so far in your most generous
thoughts,

That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me
most

265 To my revenge; but in my terms of honour
I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation,
Till by some elder masters of known honour
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungored. But till that time,
270 I do receive your offered love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely,
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance

Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest 275
night,

Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin
Hamlet,

You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord.

Your grace has laid the odds o' the weaker 280
side.

King. I do not fear it, I have seen you both;
But since he is bettered, we have therefore
odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well. These foils have all a
length? [*They prepare to play.*]

Osr. Ay, my good lord. 285

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,

Or quit in answer of the third exchange,

Let all the battlements their ordnance fire.

The King shall drink to Hamlet's better 290
breath,

And in the cup an union shall he throw,

Richer than that which four successive kings

In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me
the cups,

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,

The trumpet to the cannoneer without, 295

The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,

“Now the King drinks to Hamlet.” Come, begin;

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, sir.

Laer. Come, my lord.

{ They play.

300 *Ham.* One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgement.

Osr. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well; again.

King. Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;

Here's to thy health.

[*Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.*

Give him the cup.

Ham. I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.

305 Come. [*They play.*] Another hit; what say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows.

The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

310 *Ham.* Good madam.

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.

King. [*Aside.*] It is the poisoned cup; it is too late.

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think 't. 315

Laer. [*Aside.*] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes; you but dally.

I pray you, pass with your best violence.

I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

Laer. Say you so? Come on. [*They play.* 320

Osr. Nothing, neither way.

Laer. Have at you now!

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*

King. Part them; they are incensed.

Ham. Nay, come, again. [*The Queen falls.*

Osr. Look to the Queen there, ho!

Hor. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord!

Osr. How is 't, Laertes? 325

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe,
Osric;

I am justly killed with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the Queen?

King. She swoonds to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet,—

330 The drink, the drink! I am poisoned.

[*Dies.*

Ham. O villany! Ho! let the door be locked:
Treachery! Seek it out.

Laer. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art
slain.

No medicine in the world can do thee good;
335 In thee there is not half an hour of life.

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenomed. The foul practice
Hath turned itself on me. Lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poisoned.

340 I can no more:—the King, the King's to
blame.

Ham. The point envenomed too!

Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the King.*

All. Treason! treason!

King. O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.

345 *Ham.* Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned
Dane,

Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?

Follow my mother. [*King dies.*

Laer. He is justly served;

It is a poison tempered by himself.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet.

350 Mine and my father's death come not upon
thee,

Nor thine on me! [*Dies.*

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it! I follow
thee.

I am dead, Horatio. Wretched Queen, adieu!
 You that look pale and tremble at this
 chance,

That are but mates or audience to this act, ³⁵⁵
 Had I but time—as this fell sergeant, death,
 Is strict in his arrest—O, I could tell you—
 But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;
 Thou liv'st. Report me and my cause aright
 To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it. ³⁶⁰

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane;
 Here 's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou 'rt a man,
 Give me the cup. Let go. By heaven, I'll
 have 't!

O God! Horatio, what a wounded name,
 Things standing thus unknown, shall live ³⁶⁵
 behind me!

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
 Absent thee from felicity awhile,
 And in this harsh world draw thy breath in
 pain,

To tell my story.

[March afar off, and shot within.]

What warlike noise is this?

Osr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from ³⁷⁰
 Poland,

To the ambassadors of England gives
 This warlike volley.

Ham. Oh, I die, Horatio;

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit.
I can not live to hear the news from England,
375 But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice.
So tell him with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited—The rest is silence.

[*Dies.*

Hor. Now cracks a noble heart. Good night,
sweet prince,

380 And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
Why does the drum come hither?

[*March within.*

*Enter Fortinbras, the English Ambassadors,
and others.*

Fort. Where is this sight?

Hor. What is it you would see?

If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. This quarry cries on havoc. O proud
death,

385 What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?

First Amb. The sight is dismal,
And our affairs from England come too late.
The ears are senseless that should give us
hearing,

390 To tell him his commandment is fulfilled,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
Where should we have our thanks?

Hor. Not from his mouth,

Had it the ability of life to thank you.
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question, ³⁹⁵
You from the Polack wars, and you from
England,
Are here arrived, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about. So shall you ⁴⁰⁰
hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgements, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning and forced
cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fallen on the inventors' heads: all this can I ⁴⁰⁵
Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune.
I have some rights of memory in this king-
dom,
Which now to claim' my vantage doth invite ⁴¹⁰
me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw
on more.
But let this same be presently performed
Even while men's minds are wild, lest more
mischance,

415 On plots and errors, happen.

Fort.

Let four captains

Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage,

For he was likely, had he been put on,

To have proved most royally; and, for his
passage,

The soldiers' music and the rites of war

420 Speak loudly for him.

Take up the bodies. Such a sight as this

Becomes the field, but here shows much
amiss.

Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

*A dead march. Exeunt bearing off the dead
bodies; after which a peal of ordnance is shot
off.*

NOTES.

ABBREVIATIONS.

Abbott.—A Shakespearian Grammar, by E. A. Abbott. London, 1879.

Clar.—Clarendon Press Series, edited by W. Aldis Wright.

Dowden.—Hamlet, edited by E. Dowden, London, 1902.

F₁—The First Folio edition of Shakespere, 1623. Ff.—The Folios.

N. E. D.—A New English Dictionary, edited by J. A. H. Murray, Henry Bradley, and W. A. Craigie. Oxford, 1888.

Q₁—First Quarto Hamlet, 1603. Q₂—Second Quarto, 1604. Q₄—The Quartos.

Schmidt.—Shakespeare Lexicon, by A. Schmidt, London, 1886.

Var.—Variorum Edition of Hamlet, edited by H. H. Furness.

ACT I.

The theme of the tragedy is the avenging of the murder of the elder Hamlet, who is accordingly brought forward in the first scene as the late victorious king. The description of the ambitious activity of young Fortinbras of Norway prepares us for the part he plays after the catastrophe in V. ii.

I. i. 1. *Ber. Who's there?* Observe that the new comer, not the sentinel, challenges. This irregularity is taken as an indication of the suppressed excitement affecting the speakers in this first scene.

I. i. 2. *Unfold.* Disclose.

I. i. 3. *Long live the king!* This might seem the watchword, but Horatio and Marcellus use other phrases in line 15, below.

I. i. 13. *Rivals.* Partners.

I. i. 15. *The Dane.* The king of Denmark.

I. i. 16. *Give you.* I. e., God give you.

I. i. 21. The Folios give this speech to Marcellus.

I. i. 23. *Fantasy.* Imagination.

I. i. 25. *Dreaded.* Full of dread. For this class of

adjectives formed from nouns by the addition of -ed, with the force of "full of," "furnished with," "capable of," see Schmidt, p. 1417.

I. i. 29. *Approve*. Confirm the testimony of.

I. i. 33. *What*, etc. This may be taken (1) as a clause in apposition with "story," or (2) as a case of the omission of the preposition "with."

I. i. 36. *Pole*. Pole star.

I. i. 42. *Scholar*. This is usually explained as a man who can speak Latin, that being the usual language in which evil spirits were exorcised. But Horatio does not speak Latin here, and *scholar* may be meant to imply merely the possession of the skill that will enable him to address it with due circumspection.

I. i. 45. *Spoke*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 4, (c). There is a reference here to the belief that a ghost cannot speak till it has been spoken to.

I. i. 49. *Sometimes*. Formerly.

I. i. 55. *On . . . of*. Cf. Introduction, p. 48.

I. i. 57. *Sensible*. Appealing to the senses. *Arouch*. Confirmation.

I. i. 62. *Parle*. Parley, conference, which, in this case, issued in fighting.

I. i. 63. *Smote*. Defeated. *Sledged Polacks*. Poles, who use sledges. The Quartos read "sleaded pollax," and F_1 and F_2 "sledged Pollax." These readings have given rise to such interpretations as "leaded battle-axe," "Poles using sledge-hammers," etc.

I. i. 65. *Jump*. Exactly. Cf. the use of *jump* = agree, as in Twelfth Night, V. i. 259-260. "Till each circumstance . . . do cohere and jump." The Folios read "just."

I. i. 67. *In what particular thought to work*. Exactly what to think.

I. i. 68. *Gross and scope*. Gross scope, general view. Hendiadys.

I. i. 70. *Good*. Good friends.

I. i. 72. *Toils*. Causes to toil. *Subject*. People.

I. i. 74. *Mart*. Buying.

I. i. 75. *Impress*. Compulsory service.

I. i. 77. *Toward*. At hand.

I. i. 83. *Emulate*. Emulous, envious.

I. i. 84. For metre, cf. Introduction, p. 43, 1.

I. i. 86. For metre, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 4.

- I. i. 87. *Heraldry*. The regular formalities of heralds.
- I. i. 89. *Seized*. Possessed.
- I. i. 90. *Moiety competent*. Sufficient portion.
- I. i. 91. *Gaged*. Staked.
- I. i. 92. *Inheritance*. Possession.
- I. i. 94. *Carriage*. Import. *Article designed*. Q² and F, read, "article design." The reading in the text means "document drawn up" or "before-mentioned." Other suggested emendations are, "articles' design," and "articled design."
- I. i. 96. *Unimproved mettle*. Courage not hitherto turned to account. Cf. our modern phrase, "unimproved land."
- I. i. 98. *Sharked up*. Gathered indiscriminately, as a shark does its food. *Lawless*. The Folios read, "landless."
- I. i. 100. *Stomach*. Chance to show courage.
- I. i. 103. Both *compulsatory* (Ff.) and *compulsive* (Qq.) are equivalents of "compulsory."
- I. i. 107. *Romage*. Turmoil.
- I. i. 108. *Be*. Subjunctive, expressing doubt.
- I. i. 109. *Sort*. Suit.
- I. i. 111. *Question*. Occasion.
- I. i. 113. *State*. Probably "condition."
- I. i. 118. *As stars*. A line or more seems to have dropped out before these words
- I. i. 119. *Disasters*. Ominous appearances. The original astrological significance of the word still survived. *Moist star*. The moon, which causes the tides.
- I. i. 121. *Doomsday*. In Matthew XXIV. 29, among the signs of the Judgement occurs, "And the moon shall not give her light."
- I. i. 123. *Harbingers*. Forerunners; originally, the men who went ahead to prepare lodging for a king. *Still*. Always.
- I. i. 124. *Omen*. I. e., the fulfilment of the omen, the calamity itself.
- I. i. 126. *Our climatures*. The climates, regions, where we live. The singular would be more natural, so some have emended to "climature," and others have interpreted it as = "those who live under the same climate."
- I. i. 128. *Cross it*. Cross its path, and so, according to popular superstition, run the risk of coming under its malign influence.

- I. i. 132. That may give thee ease and be a virtuous thing for me to do.
- I. i. 135. *Happily*. Haply; or luckily.
- I. i. 141. *Partisan*. A kind of long-handled battle-axe. a halberd.
- I. i. 155. *Extravagant*. Wandering beyond bounds. *Erring*. In the etymological sense of "wandering."
- I. i. 157. *Probation*. Proof.
- I. i. 159. *'Gainst*. Just before.
- I. i. 163. *Strike*. Exert evil influence. Cf. "moon-struck."
- I. i. 164. *Takes*. Bewitches. Cf. "taking" — infectious; bewitching.
- I. i. 165. *Gracious*. Blessed.
- I. i. 174. *Loves*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 1, (b).
- I. ii. 1 ff. This speech, being delivered from the throne, is necessarily formal.
- I. ii. 2. *That*. Often used instead of repeating "though."
- I. ii. 4. *Brow of woe*. Woful brow. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (a).
- I. ii. 9. *Jointress*. Joint possessor. *To*. Of. Cf. Introduction, p. 48.
- I. ii. 10. *Defeated*. Disfigured. Cf. Othello, I. iii. 346, "Defeat thy favour [= appearance] with an usurped beard."
- I. ii. 11. *An . . . a*. The Folios read, "one . . . one."
- I. ii. 14. *Barred*. Shut out of our counsels.
- I. ii. 15. *Wisdoms*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 1, (b). and "loves," I. i. 174
- I. ii. 17. *That*. What.
- I. ii. 18. *Supposal*. Notion.
- I. ii. 20. *Disjoint*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 4, (d).
- I. ii. 21. *Collegued with this dream*. Having as his (only) ally this imaginary advantage.
- I. ii. 23. *Importing*. Concerning.
- I. ii. 31. *Gait*. Proceeding.
- I. ii. 33. *Subject*. Cf. I. i. 72.
- I. ii. 37. *To business*. Of negotiating. Cf. Introduction, p. 48.
- I. ii. 38. *Delated*. This may mean (1) handed over (to you); or (2) submitted for acceptance (to Norway); or (3) * may be a form of *dilated*, the reading of the Folios, mean-

ing "set forth at large." *Allow.* Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 4, (b).

I. ii. 41. *Nothing.* Used as adverb. = not at all.

I. ii. 45. *Lose your voice.* Waste your breath.

I. ii. 47. *Native.* Naturally related.

I. ii. 56. *Pardon.* Permission.

I. ii. 63. Spend your time according to your will and your best virtues.

I. ii. 64. *Cousin.* Used for any grade of relationship outside of one's immediate family.

I. ii. 65. *More than kin.* Closer than kinsmen usually are, because both uncle and step-father. *Less than kind.* (1) The feeling between us is less than that of kindness; or, (2) though so closely related, we are not of the same nature. For other interpretations, see Var.

I. ii. 67. *Sun.* The mention of "clouds" immediately after "son" suggested the obvious pun. He means to hint obscurely that he does not like being so nearly a son to his uncle as his mother's marriage has made him.

I. ii. 70. *Vailed.* Cast down.

I. ii. 71. For metre, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 5.

I. ii. 81. *Haviour.* Appearance.

I. ii. 86. For metre, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 5.

I. ii. 90. *Survivor.* This may be taken as object of *bound*; or "was" may be understood.

I. ii. 92. *Obsequious.* Suitable to obseques. For metre, cf. Introduction, p. 43, 1. *Persever.* For accent, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

I. ii. 93. *Condolment.* Grief. The prefix has a merely intensive force.

I. ii. 95. *Incorrect.* Unsubmissive.

I. ii. 96. *Unfortified.* I. e., by religion.

I. ii. 97. *Simple.* Foolish.

I. ii. 99. *Any the most vulgar thing to sense.* Any thing most frequently presented to the senses.

I. ii. 104. *Who.* This form of the relative personifies Reason. *Still.* Always.

I. ii. 105. *Till he.* Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 3, (a), and Abbott, §§ 184 and 206.

I. ii. 107. *Unprevailing.* Used in Elizabethan English for "unavailing."

I. ii. 112. *Impart.* The construction seems confused. *Impart* would regularly take "nobility of love" (=distin-

guished love) as a direct object; the "with" is lost sight of before the main verb appears. Otherwise, *impart* must be taken as = "express myself," a sense not easily paralleled.

I. ii. 114. *Retrograde*. Adverse; an astrological term.

I. ii. 124. *Sits smiling to my heart*. This may be taken as implying a personification of *accord*; or *sits* may be used = "suits," somewhat as in 2 Henry IV., V. ii. 44-45, "This new and gorgeous garment, majesty, *Sits* not so easy on me as you think."

I. ii. 125. The frequency of the king's drinking may be intended to suggest an attempt to drive away remorse.

I. ii. 127. *Rouse*. A deep draught, a bumper.

I. ii. 130. *Resolve*. Dissolve.

I. ii. 134. *Uses*. Ways.

I. ii. 137. *Merely*. Entirely.

I. ii. 140. *Hyperion*. Here used for Apollo, the sun god. Shakspeare accents the antepenult, the Greek the penult. For the metre of the line, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 4.

I. ii. 141. *Beteem*. Permit.

I. ii. 147. *Or e'er*. Before ever. It is often written "or ere," but cf. line 183, below.

I. ii. 149. *Niobe*. "Proud of her numerous progeny, she provoked the anger of Apollo and Artemis by boasting over their mother, Leto, who had but those two children. She was punished by seeing all her children die by the arrows of the two light deities." (Century Dictionary).

I. ii. 150. *Discourse of reason*. Reasoning faculties.

I. ii. 154. *Unrighteous*. Because insincere.

I. ii. 155. *Flushing*. Red color. The sense derived from "flush" = to fill with water, is less probable. *Galled*. Sore with weeping.

I. ii. 157. *Dexterity*. Celerity, for which some editors have thought it a misprint. But cf. the colloquial use of "clever" = smart, quick, showing alacrity.

I. ii. 159. *Break*. A subjunctive.

I. ii. 163. *Change*. Exchange, reciprocate (the name of friend).

I. ii. 164. *Make*. Do. Cf. II. ii. 283. Shakspeare puns on the two senses of the word in *As You Like It*, I. i. 31 ff.:

Ol. Now, sir, what make you here?

Orl. Nothing. I am not taught to make any thing.

Ol. What mar you then, sir?

I. ii. 182. *Dearest*. "Dear" is used of whatever touches us nearly, either in love or hate, joy or sorrow. [Clar.]

I. ii. 186. *I saw him once*. Note the inconsistency with I. i. 60-63, where two occasions are mentioned.

I. ii. 192. *Season your admiration*. Modify your wonder. Cf. II. i. 28.

I. ii. 193. *Deliver*. Report.

I. ii. 198. *Waste*. Q_1 reads "vast"; Q_2 and F_1 read "wast," and editors have read variously (1) "vast," with sense of "limitlessness" or "void"; (2) "waste," with sense of "emptiness"; or (3) "waist," with sense of "middle."

I. ii. 200. *At point*. At all points, completely. *Cap-a-pie*. From head to foot.

I. ii. 203. *Fear-surprised*. Seized with fear.

I. ii. 204. *Distilled*. Besides "to vaporize and then condense," *distill* may mean "to trickle in drops," or "to melt." The last of these senses is probably what Shakspeare intended, but it is not very exact. Some editors adopt the reading of F_1 , "bestilled," a strong form of "stilled;" others emend to "bechilled."

I. ii. 205. *With*. Cf. Introduction, p. 48. *Act*. "Operative action."

I. ii. 209. *Delivered*. Cf. line 193, above.

I. ii. 216. *It*. This form of the neuter possessive is frequent in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The older regular possessive neuter was "his," which began to be replaced by the irregular coinage, "its," in the seventeenth century. Cf. I. iii. 60; V. i. 246.

I. ii. 230. *Beaver*. The movable part in the front of the helmet.

I. ii. 235. *Amazed*. Confounded—a stronger word than it is to-day.

I. ii. 237. *Tell*. Count.

I. ii. 239, 241. *Grizzled*. Grey, "a sable silvered."

I. ii. 247. *Tenable*. To be held. For this passive use, cf. "sensible;" in I. i. 57, and Abbott, § 3.

I. ii. 250. *Loves*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 1, (b), and line 253, below.

I. ii. 255. *Foul play*. Unfair play, not necessarily murder.

I. iii. The third scene introduces the family of the Lord Chamberlain: Polonius, a statesman long past his prime, retaining in his memory the phrases in which he had once

summed up the results of much shrewdness of observation, but displaying no lofty sense of honor; Laertes, the type of the gilded youth, with some of his father's love of giving advice and with equally low personal ideals; Ophelia, gentle and charming, but too docile to be a worthy mate for Hamlet.

I. iii. 2. *Give benefit.* Are favorable.

I. iii. 3. *Convey is assistant.* Means of conveyance are available.

I. iii. 6. *Fashion.* Something transient. *Toy in blood* Whim of passion.

I. iii. 7. *Primy.* Of the spring-time.

I. iii. 8. The scansion of this line is difficult. The most natural way of reading it is to dwell on "sweet" so as to give it the value of two syllables.

I. iii. 9. *Suppliance.* That which supplies, or fills up, a minute; pastime.

I. iii. 12. *Thews.* Physical strength. *Temple.* For this figure of speech for the human body, cf. I Cor. vi. 19.

I. iii. 15. *Cautel.* Decelt.

I. iii. 21. *Safety.* If this, the reading of the Quartos, is retained, it must be trisyllabic. The Folios read "sanctity," which has been conjecturally emended to "sanity."

I. iii. 23. *Voice.* Vote. Cf. V. ii. 376. *Yielding.* Consent.

I. iii. 26. *Particular act and place.* The power of action which belongs to him in his peculiar position. The Folios read, "peculiar sect and force."

I. iii. 34. Do not go as far as your feelings may prompt.

I. iii. 39. *Canker.* A kind of worm or caterpillar.

I. iii. 40. *Buttons.* Buds. *Disclosed.* Opened.

I. iii. 42. *Contagious blastments.* Pernicious blights.

I. iii. 44. Youth rebels against itself, though no tempter be near.

I. iii. 45. *Effect.* Upshot, substance.

I. iii. 47. *Ungracious.* Graceless.

I. iii. 49. *Puffed.* Bloated.

I. iii. 50. *Dalliance.* Pleasure, wantonness.

I. iii. 51. *Recks not his own rede.* Heeds not his own advice. *Fear me.* Fear for me.

I. iii. 53. *Grace.* Favor of heaven.

I. iii. 54. *Occasion smiles upon.* Fortune is propitious in permitting.

I. iii. 58. *These few precepts.* Several of the maxims that follow are found in a slightly different form in other books, such as Lyly's *Euphues*. The idea of an elderly statesman giving advice to his son in this proverbial form was familiar to the Elizabethans. The apparent inconsistency of the wisdom put into Polonius's mouth here with his foolishness in other scenes, is best explained by Johnson's view of him as a man of much ability falling into his dotage. Cf. Coleridge's saying that Polonius "is the personified memory of wisdom no longer actually possessed."

I. iii. 59. *Character.* Engrave, write. For accent, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

I. iii. 60. *Unproportioned.* Not in keeping with the occasion. *Hts.* Cf. I. ii. 216, note.

I. iii. 61. *Familiar.* Friendly, courteous. *Vulgar.* Explained by lines 64, 65.

I. iii. 64. *Dull.* Make callous, so as to lose discrimination. *Entertainment.* Welcoming.

I. iii. 65. *Comrade.* For accent, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

I. iii. 67. *Bear 't.* Conduct yourself.

I. iii. 69. *Censure.* Opinion, not necessarily unfavorable. Cf. III. ii. 32, 95.

I. iii. 74. This line is probably corrupt. Q₂ reads, "Or of a most select and generous, chiefe in that." Ff. read, "Are of a most select and generous cheff in that." Some editors omit "of a," others both "of a" and "chief." *Generous.* Showing gentle breeding. *Chief.* By some taken = "chiefly"; by others, as a misspelling of "sheaf" = "set," "social circle."

I. iii. 77. *Husbandry.* Economy.

I. iii. 81. *Season.* Ripen.

i. iii. 83. *Tend.* Wait.

I. iii. 90. *Marry.* Originally an oath by the Virgin Mary.

I. iii. 94. *Put on.* Told to.

I. iii. 102. *Unsifted.* Untried.

I. iii. 106. *Tenders.* Polonius is punning on two senses of the word: (1) offers (2) the sense preserved in "legal tender."

I. iii. 107. *Tender yourself more dearly.* Hold yourself less cheap.

I. iii. 109. *Tender me a fool.* Give me a fool for a laughter.

I. iii. 115. *Springes*. Snares. The woodcock was supposed to be a particularly foolish bird.

I. iii. 116. *Prodigal*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 5, (b).

I. iii. 117. For metre. cf. Introduction, p. 44, 3.

I. iii. 120. *Fire*. A dissyllable here.

I. iii. 122. *Entreatments*. Negotiations for surrender. This word and *command to parley*, are used in allusion to the old figure of speech in which a woman's heart was spoken of as a besieged castle, and the lover as the besieger.

I. iii. 127. *Brokers*. Go-betweens.

I. iii. 128. *Investments*. Garments.

I. iii. 130. *Breathing*. Whispering.

I. iii. 133. *Slander*. Use so as to bring disgrace. *Moment*. Abbott (§§ 22, 430) treats this as a genitive used adjectively. Cf. II. ii. 624, "the region kites," and III. i. 165, "the honey of his music vows." Many editors emend to "moment's."

I. iv. The three preceding scenes have served chiefly to explain the opening situations and introduce the characters. In the fourth the action proper begins, and a definite motive for the hero's conduct is supplied.

I. iv. 1. *Shrewdly*. Keenly.

I. iv. 2. *Eager*. Bitter. Old French, *aigre*; Latin, *acer*, sharp. Cf. I. v. 69.

I. iv. 3. *Hour*. Dissyllable here.

I. iv. 7-38. This digression on the drinking customs of the Danish serves merely to fill the space before the ghost appears. In the Folios lines 17-38 are omitted.

I. iv. 8. *Wake*. Sit late. *Rouse*. Cf. I. ii. 127, note

I. iv. 9. *Wassail*. Carousal. *Upspring*. Most probably, a rolstering dance. The interpretation, "upstart," "supplanter," (referring to the King), is not plausible.

I. iv. 18. *Taxed of*. Censured by.

I. iv. 19. *Clepe*. Call.

I. iv. 20. *Soil our addition*. Give us an addition (= title) that stains our honor.

I. iv. 21. *At height*. To the utmost.

I. iv. 22. *Attribute*. The honor that would be attributed to us.

I. iv. 23. *Particular*. Individual.

I. iv. 24. *Mole*. Blemish.

I. iv. 26. *His*. Its. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 3, (b).

I. iv. 27. *O'ergrowth of some complexion*. In the old

physiology the complexion or temperament was supposed to be determined by the relative predominance of the four humors in the body, which made a man phlegmatic, melancholy, choleric, or sanguine. The present phrase means an excess of any of these. For pronunciation of *complexion*, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

I. iv. 28. *Pales*. Fence.

I. iv. 29. *O'er-leavens*. Produces too great an effect on.

I. iv. 30. *Plausible*. Pleasing. *That* repeats the "that" of line 24.

I. iv. 32. *Nature's . . . star*. A mark bestowed by nature or by chance.

I. iv. 33. *Their virtues else*. Their other virtuous qualities. These words take the place of *these men* (line 30), 's subject of the sentence. *Grace*. The grace of God.

I. iv. 34. *Undergo*. Sustain.

I. iv. 35. *Censure*. Opinion. Cf. I. iii. 69.

I. iv. 36, 37. The Quartos read, "The dram of eale Doth all the noble substance of a doubt," which commentators have vainly tried to interpret. *Dram of eale*. Small amount of evil, *eale* being taken as a form of "evil," as the Quartos print "deale" for devil." *Dout*. Do out, abolish, cancel. This word is still frequent in English dialects. Cf. IV. vii. 192. For other emendations, cf. Var., I. 82 ff. The most recent is Delamaine's, "The arm of fate Doth all the noble substance oft requite."

I. iv. 38. *His*. Its. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 3, (b).

I. iv. 40. *Spirit of health*. Saved soul. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (a).

I. iv. 43. *Questionable*. Inviting question.

I. iv. 47. *Canonized*. Buried with the rites prescribed by canon law. The accent is on the middle syllable.

I. iv. 48. *Cerements*. Waxed wrappings of the dead.

I. iv. 49. *Inurned*. The Quartos read "Interred."

I. iv. 52. *Complete*. Cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

I. iv. 55. *Disposition*. State of mind. For the elliptical construction in these lines, cf. As You Like It, III. ii. 161-62:

Heaven would that she these gifts should have,
And I to live and die her slave.

I. iv. 65. *Fee*. Value.

I. iv. 73. *Deprive your sovereignty of reason*. Take away

the control your reason exercises over you. Cf. Lucrece, 1186, " 'Tis honour to *deprive* dishonoured life."

I. iv. 75. *Toys of desperation*. Desperate fancies. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (a).

I. iv. 82. *Artery*. Sinew.

I. iv. 83. *Nemean* has the accent on the first syllable. *Nerve*. Sinew.

I. iv. 85. *Lets*. Hinders. Cf. Romans I. 13.

I. v. This scene is dramatically merely a continuation of the previous one, with a slight change of place.

I. v. 6. *Bound*. Ready. The ghost takes it for "bound" = "obliged."

I. v. 12. *Days of nature*. Natural life. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (a).

I. v. 17. *Stars . . . spheres*. According to the Ptolemaic astronomy, the stars were supposed to be set in crystal spheres that revolved round the earth. Cf. IV. vii. 15.

I. v. 20. *Porpentine*. The usual Shakspearean form of "porcupine."

I. v. 21. *Eternal blazon*. Declaration about the eternal world.

I. v. 31. *Apt*. Ready.

I. v. 32. *Fat weed*. The weed that makes fat or dull. Cf. Macbeth, I. iii. 84-5, "The insane root that takes the reason prisoner." R. K. Root quotes Vergil and Ovid as associating the poppy with Lethe.

I. v. 33. *Roots*. The Folios read, "rots." *Lethe wharf*. The banks of Lethe, the river of oblivion.

I. v. 37. *Process*. History.

I. v. 38. *Abused*. Deceived.

I. v. 40. *Prophetic*. Referring to his aversion to his uncle.

I. v. 42. *Adulterate*. Cf. "emulate," I. i. 83. This is the first intimation of the adultery of the Queen and Claudius, but it seems clear from what follows in this speech that the word is used advisedly.

I. v. 61. *Secure*. Unsuspecting. For accent, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

I. v. 62. *Hebenon*. Most probably, "ebony." "Henbane" has also been suggested.

I. v. 68. *Posset*. Curdle, thicken.

I. v. 69. *Eager*. Sour. Cf. I. iv. 2.

I. v. 71. *Instant*. Immediate.

I. v. 72. *Lazar*. Leper.

I. v. 75. *Dispatched*. Deprived.

I. v. 77. *Unhousel'd*. Without taking the sacrament. *Disappointed*. Improperly appointed, unprepared. *Un-aneled*. Without having received extreme unction.

I. v. 80. In both Quartos and Folios this line forms part of the ghost's speech, but the stage tradition gives it to Hamlet.

I. v. 83. *Luxury*. Lust.

I. v. 85. *Taint*. Defile.

I. v. 90. *Uneffectual fire*. Three explanations are possible: (1) giving light without heat; (2) not amounting to much; (3) fading as daylight grows.

I. v. 97. *Globe*. Head.

I. v. 98. *Table*. Tablet.

I. v. 99. *Fond*. Foolish. *Records*. Cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

I. v. 100. *Saws*. Maxims. *Pressur'd*. Impressions. Cf. III. ii. 29.

I. v. 107. *My tables*. The custom of carrying tablets on which to jot down memoranda was common among the studious in Shakspere's time. There has been discussion as to whether it is line 108 that Hamlet is represented as writing down. Brae (quoted in Var.) holds that line 108 is exclamatory, parallel with lines 105 and 106, that 107 is parenthetical and is spoken while Hamlet is finding his tablets, that line 111 contains what Hamlet wrote, and that the stage-direction "*Writing*" (which is modern) ought to be inserted after line 111. That in line 108 would then be: "to think that." This makes Hamlet's conduct somewhat less eccentric. On the other hand, the introduction of the stage direction may be a mistake, and Hamlet's excited talk may not have been intended to be accompanied by any actual writing.

I. v. 110. *Word*. Watchword, motto.

I. v. 114. *So be it*. The Folios give this speech to Marcellus. In the mouth of either speaker it is, of course, merely an "Amen" to Horatio's prayer.

I. v. 116. *Come, bird*. Suggested by the call of Horatio, which suggested a falconer's call to a hawk.

I. v. 147. *Upon my sword*. Swearing upon the cross-hilt of a sword was common. The symbolism was some times made more marked by a cross or the word "Jesus"

engraved on the handle. There is evidence that the custom was especially prevalent among the Scandinavians.

- I. v. 150. *Truepenny*. Honest fellow.
- I. v. 156. *Hic et ubique?* Lat., Here and everywhere?
- I. v. 163. *Pioner*. Digger.
- I. v. 165. *As a stranger*. I. e., Asking no questions.
- I. v. 167. *Your*. This is the impersonal use. * Cf. III. ii. 125, IV. iii. 22-25, V. i. 188.
- I. v. 172. *Antic*. Fantastic.
- I. v. 174. *Encumbered*. Folded.
- I. v. 176. *An if*. A common intensification of the conditional use of "and." The usual Elizabethan spelling is "and," but "an" is commonly adopted in modern editions to distinguish it from the co-ordinate use of the same word.
- I. v. 178. *Giving out*. Expression, profession* of knowledge. *To note*. The "to" is unnecessary after the "shall" of line 173.
- I. v. 185. *Friending*. Friendliness.

ACT II.

II. i. The first part of this scene throws further light on the characters of Polonius and Laertes; the second part tells of the effect of Hamlet's discovery upon his attitude to Ophelia.

- II. i. 3. *Marvellous*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 5, (b).
- II. i. 8. *Keep*. Live.
- II. i. 10. *Encompassment*. Roundabout method. *Drift of question*. Tendency of the conversation.
- II. i. 11. *Comc*. Future, not imperative. *More nearer*. For the double comparative in adjectives, cf. Introduction, p. 46, 2.
- II. i. 12. *It*. Indefinite use.
- II. i. 13. *Take*. Assume.
- II. i. 20. *Forgeries*. Fabricated charges.
- II. i. 25. *Fencing*. The context seems to imply that duelling is meant.
- II. i. 28. *Season*. Qualify. Cf. I. ii. 192.
- II. i. 29. *Another*. A further.
- II. i. 31. *Breathe*. Whisper, speak gently. Cf. I. iii. 130, and II. i. 44. *Quaintly*. Skilfully, delicately.
- II. i. 34. *Unreclaimed*. Untamed, a term of falconry.
- II. i. 35. *Of general assault*. Such as assails every one.

II. i. 38. *Fetch of wit*. Clever contrivance. The Folios read "of warrant" = justifiable. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (a).

II. i. 42. *Converse*. For accent, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6. *Him*. He whom. Cf. Abbott, § 208.

II. i. 43. *Having*. If he has. *Prenominate*. Before mentioned.

II. i. 45. *Closes . . . consequence*. Agrees with you, and goes on to say.

II. i. 47. *Addition*. Title.

II. i. 57. *Rouse*. Cf. I. ii. 127.

II. i. 63. *Of wisdom and of reach*. Of far-reaching wisdom.

II. i. 64. *Windlasses*. Circuitous paths. *Assays* = attempts. The phrase, *assays of bias*, means a curved course like that followed by a bowl with a bias, or weight on one side.

II. i. 67. *Have*. Understand.

II. i. 70. *In yourself*. On your own account, not merely by spies.

II. i. 72. *Ply*. Apply himself to, practise.

II. i. 76. *Closet*. Private chamber. Cf. III. ii. 329.

II. i. 77. *Unbraced*. Unfastened.

II. i. 79. *Down-gyved*. In loose rings like fetters.

II. i. 90. For metre, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 3.

II. i. 94. *Bulk*. Body, trunk.

II. i. 101. *Ecstasy*. Madness.

II. i. 102. *Violent property*. Peculiar nature, when violent. *Fordoes*. Destroys.

IV. i. 111. *Quoted*. Observed.

IV. i. 113. *Proper to*. Characteristic of.

II. i. 114. *Cast beyond*. Over-reach.

II. i. 117. *Move*. Cause.

II. i. 118. It might cause more grief to hide the love of Hamlet for Ophelia than it would cause hatred to reveal it.

II. ii. This long scene begins with the introduction of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who are shown first in relation to the King and Queen, and later to Hamlet. The Norwegian affair is carried to the point that admits of the later appearances of Fortinbras. Polonius develops his mistaken theory of the cause of Hamlet's apparent madness, and Hamlet himself continues at intervals his simula-

tion of distraction. The appearance of the players makes possible the crucial test of the King's guilt, carried out in the third act; and the conversation of Hamlet with the players, along with the soliloquy, gives us with ever-increasing detail the character of the hero. The evident importance of this last object in the eyes of the dramatist accounts for the comparatively slight progress of the action in these six hundred lines.

II. ii. 2. *Moreover*. Besides.

II. ii. 11. *Of*. From. Cf. Introduction, p. 48.

II. ii. 12. *Haviour*. Cf. I. ii. 81. The Folios read "humour."

II. ii. 13. *Rest*. Remaining. residence.

II. ii. 14. *Companics*. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (b).

II. ii. 17. *Whether*. Cf. Introduction, p. 43, 2.

II. ii. 18. *Opened*. Revealed.

II. ii. 22. *Gentry*. Courtesy.

II. ii. 24. *Supply and profit*. Support and furtherance.

II. ii. 27. *Of*. Over. Cf. Introduction, p. 48.

II. ii. 29. *Both*. Note the ambiguity.

II. ii. 30. *Bent*. Inclination. Cf. III. ii. 389-90, note.

II. ii. 38. *Practices*. Devices.

II. ii. 42. *Still*. Always.

II. ii. 47. *Hunts . . . policy*. Does not follow the track of statecraft.

II. ii. 52. *Fruit*. Dessert.

II. ii. 56. *Doubt*. Fear, suspect. Cf. line 118, below.

II. ii. 61. *First*. First audience, or request.

II. ii. 67. *Borne in hand*. Deluded by a series of pretences.

II. ii. 71. *Assay of arms*. Test of war.

II. ii. 79. *Regards*. Terms regarding. *Allowance*. Permission. "With such conditions regarding the safety of the country as may be attached to the permission."

II. ii. 80. *Likes*. Pleases.

II. ii. 81. *At our more considered time*. When we have more leisure for deliberation.

II. ii. 83. *Well-took*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 4, (c).

II. ii. 86. *Expostulate*. Discuss at large.

II. ii. 90. *Wit*. Wisdom.

II. ii. 95. *Art*. Decoration, flourishes, as opposed to direct statement.

II. ii. 96. *Art*. Artfulness, as opposed to truth.

- II. ii. 105. *Perpend.* Ponder.
- II. ii. 118. *Doubt.* This third "doubt" = suspect.
- II. ii. 121. *Reckon.* Count metrically.
- II. ii. 124. *Machine.* Body. *Is.* Belongs. The speeches of Polonius and the letter of Hamlet are in different ways examples of the pedantic and affected language common in Elizabeth's time.
- II. ii. 127. *More above.* Moreover.
- II. ii. 137. *Played . . . table-book.* Two interpretations have been given: (1) served as a means of communication; (2) shut up what I knew in my mind as in a desk or note-book. The second is the better.
- II. ii. 138. *Given my heart a winking.* Refused to let my mind perceive.
- II. ii. 140. *Round.* Straight.
- II. ii. 141. *Bespeak.* Address.
- II. ii. 142. *Star.* *F₂* reads "sphere," which may give the idea intended; or *star* may mean "destiny," "fortune," with an astrological reference.
- II. ii. 143. *Prescripts.* Instructions. *Ff.* read "precepts."
- II. ii. 149. *Watch.* Sleeplessness.
- II. ii. 150. *Lightness.* Light-headedness.
- II. ii. 160. *Centre.* I. e., of the earth.
- II. ii. 166. *Thereon.* On that account.
- II. ii. 171. *Board.* Accost. *Presently.* Immediately.
- II. ii. 174. *God-a-mercy.* God have mercy.
- II. ii. 176. *Fishmonger.* This mistaking of a courtier for a fishmonger is merely part of Hamlet's pretended madness, and no deep meaning need be sought for the choice of this particular trade.
- II. ii. 184. *A good kissing carrion.* Carrion good for kissing (by the sun). Warburton, who has been largely followed, emended to "A God, kissing carrion."
- II. ii. 190. *By.* About.
- II. ii. 198-99. *Matter.* Hamlet puns on the two senses. (1) Subject-matter; (2) Cause of dispute.
- II. ii. 199. *Who.* "The inflection of *who* is frequently neglected," (Abbott, § 274).
- II. ii. 203. *Purging.* Discharging.
- II. ii. 208. *Honesty.* Propriety.
- II. ii. 209. *Old as I am.* Of my age.
- II. ii. 216. *Pregnant.* Clever.
- II. ii. 217. *Happiness.* Felicity in expression.

II. ii. 238. *Indifferent*. Middling. Cf. III. i. 124.

II. ii. 274. *Then are our beggars bodies*. Beggary is no one's ambition, and so, according to the previous speeches, is not shadowy.

II. ii. 275. *Outstretched*. Glorified, or far-famed. The epithet seems to have been suggested by the mention of shadows. The thread of sense in the whole passage is intentionally spun very fine.

II. ii. 277. *Fay*. Faith.

II. ii. 282. *Beaten*. Familiar.

II. ii. 283. *Make*. Cf. I. ii. 164, note.

II. ii. 287. *Dear a halfpenny*. Dear at a halfpenny.

II. ii. 294. *Modesties*. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (b).

II. ii. 300. *Consonancy*. Harmony, agreeable companionship.

II. ii. 302. *Proposer*. I. e., of oaths. Cf. I. v. 152.

II. ii. 303. *Withal*. As often, merely = "with." *Even*. Straightforward.

II. ii. 306. *Of*. Upon.

II. ii. 310. *Prevent*. Here used in a sense involving both the earlier meaning, "go before," and the later, "hinder." *Discovery*. Disclosure, betrayal of your secret instructions.

II. ii. 314. *Exercises*. Probably "occupations" in general, as in III. i. 45, for it appears from V. ii. 198, that physical exercise had not been abandoned.

II. ii. 318. *Brave*. Grand, fine.

II. ii. 319. *Fretted*. Adorned.

II. ii. 324. *Express*. "Well-framed or modelled" (N. E. D.) "Expressive" (Schmidt). Cf. "express image" (Hebrews. I. 3), with the idea of reproducing the form of a mould, hence "exactly fitting," and here, "well-adapted to his purpose."

II. ii. 328. *Quintessence*. According to the old philosophers, everything was made up of the four elements, fire, air, earth, water, and a fifth or spiritual essence, the *quintessence*; hence, the purest and most perfect form of anything.

II. ii. 336. *Lenten*. Like diet in Lent, meagre.

II. ii. 337. *Coted*. Outstripped; a hunting term.

II. ii. 340 ff. This whole passage, with its allusions to happenings in the Elizabethan theatrical world, is typical of Shakspeare's carelessness of anachronism.

II. ii. 344. *Humorous. Eccentric.*

II. ii. 345-46. *Whose lungs are tickle o' the sere.* Who are easily moved to laughter. The *sere* is a part of a gun-lock, and to be *tickle o' the sere* meant "to go off on the slightest touch." For the lungs as the seat of laughter, Cf. *As You Like It*, II. vii. 30, "My lungs began to crow like chanticleer."

II. ii. 347-48. *Or the blank verse shall halt for 't.* Even if she have to break the rules of metre to express herself.

II. ii. 351. *Residence.* I. e., in the city.

II. ii. 354. *Inhibition.* Stoppage of performances in the city; not necessarily a legal prohibition.

II. ii. 355. *Innovation.* Probably the growing fashion of performances by companies of children in the licensed theatres.

II. ii. 361. *Aery.* Eagle's nest, hence "brood."

II. ii. 362. *Eyases.* Young hawks. *On the top of question.* (1) "In a high key, dominating conversation" (Clar.), *question* being taken in the common sense of "discussion." (2) "More and louder than the occasion requires" (Schmidt). (3) "The height of controversy" (Dowden). It may mean no more than "At the pitch of their voices."

II. ii. 363. *Tyrannically.* Bolsterously.

II. ii. 365. *Berattle.* Attack noisily, berate. *Common stages.* The theatres where the regular actors played.

II. ii. 367. *Goose-quills.* I. e., the pens of the writers who supplied the children's companies. *Thither.* To the "common stages." The point of the passage seems to be that the children's companies, which were popular in London when this play was written, were accustomed to use personal satire, and that men were afraid to patronize the regular actors lest they should offend the children's playwrights, and be made victims of satirical attacks.

II. ii. 369. *Escoted.* Paid.

II. ii. 370. *Quality.* Profession, especially that of acting.

II. ii. 373-74. *If their means are no better.* If they find no better means of subsistence.

II. ii. 375. *Succession.* Future careers.

II. ii. 377. *Tarre.* Set on.

II. ii. 379. *Argument.* Plot of a play.

II. ii. 384. *Carry it away.* Win.

II. ii. 385-86. *Hercules and his load*. The whole world, Hercules and all. There is supposed to be a reference here to the sign of the Globe Theatre, Hercules carrying the world on his back.

II. ii. 387. Hamlet quotes his uncle as another instance of sudden growth of popularity.

II. ii. 389. *Mows*. Grimaces.

II. ii. 391. *In little*. In miniature. 'Sblood. By God's blood, an oath by the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

II. ii. 396. *Appurtenance*. Proper accompaniment.

II. ii. 398. *Comply*. Be formally courteous. Cf. V. ii. 198. *Garb*. Fashion.

II. ii. 399. *Extent*. The reception I extend.

II. ii. 401. *Entertainment*. Warm welcome.

II. ii. 405-407. *I am but mad . . . handsaw*. I am mad only in certain circumstances. When it suits me, I can tell what I am about. Heath (quoted by Clar.) takes *handsaw* as a corruption of "heronshaw" or "hernsew," a provincial word for a heron, and explains that in hawking in a southerly wind the sportsman would have the sun behind him, and so be able to distinguish between the two birds. But no proof that *handsaw* ever appears for "hernsew" has been produced, and it is quite likely that the phrase belongs to the common type of alliterative phrases, in which two quite dissimilar things are coupled. Cf. To tell "chalk from cheese," "a bull from a barn-door," etc.

II. ii. 420. *When Roscius*, etc. In the time of Cicero. The suggestion is of very stale news.

II. ii. 422. *Buz, buz*. "It was an interjection used at Oxford, when any one began a story that was generally known before." (Blackstone, quoted in Var.)

II. ii. 424. "*Then came*," etc. Probably the fragment of a ballad.

II. ii. 428-29. *Scene indivisible*. A play observing the unity of place. *Poem unlimited*. A play not limited by the unities.

II. ii. 431. *Law of writ*. Obligation to stick to the text. *Liberty*. I. e., to improvise, as comic actors often did on the Elizabethan stage.

II. ii. 437. The old song quoted by Hamlet may be found in the second and later editions of Percy's *Reliques*.

IV. i. 438. *Passing*. Surpassingly.

II. ii. 443-45. *Follows*. Hamlet puns here on the two senses of *follows*: (1) Comes next; (2) Follows logically.

II. ii. 449. *First row of the pious chanson*. Explained by the reading of Q₁. "The first verse of the godly ballad."

II. ii. 450. *Abridgement* (plural in Ff.). A means of shortening (1) my speech; (2) the time. Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V. i. 39,

Say what abridgement have you for this evening,
What masque, what music?

II. ii. 455. *Valanced*. Fringed (with a beard).

II. ii. 456-57. *My young lady*. The women's parts were taken by boys with unbroken voices.

II. ii. 459. *Chopine*. A kind of shoe raised from the ground by a thick sole of cork or wood.

II. ii. 461. *Cracked within the ring*. So far broken as to have lost its value. A coin was no longer of its full value if it had a crack running from the edge to within the ring surrounding the sovereign's head.

II. ii. 465. *Quality*. Professional skill. Cf. II. ii. 370.

II. ii. 471. *Caviare*. Used as typical of things requiring a cultivated taste. *General*. Supply "public."

II. ii. 473-74. *Cried in the top of*. Spoke with more authority than.

II. ii. 475. *Modesty*. Moderation. Cf. III. ii. 23, V. i. 231.

II. ii. 477. *Sallets*. Salads, piquant herbs to give zest; i. e., ribald or extravagant passages.

II. ii. 480. *Honest*. Honorable.

II. ii. 482. *Fine*. I. e., made fine by artifice.

II. ii. 487. *Pyrrhus*, or Neoptolemus, one of the Greek heroes who sacked Troy. He killed Priam, and married Andromache. *Hyrcanian beast*. A tiger from the shores of the Caspian Sea.

II. ii. 491. *Ominous horse*. The wooden horse in which the band of Greeks entered Troy to destroy it.

II. ii. 494. *Gules*. The heraldic term for red. *Tricked*. Adorned.

II. ii. 496. *Impasted*. The blood made into paste with the dust of the streets.

II. ii. 497. *Tyrannous*. Cruel.

II. ii. 499. *O'er-sized*. Smeared as with glue. *Coagulate*. Clotted.

II. ii. 511. *Ilium*. The citadel of Troy.

II. ii. 518. *Neutral to*. Not acting for. *Matter*. Business.

II. ii. 520. *Against*. Before.

II. ii. 521. *Rack*. Thin cloud.

II. ii. 524. *Region*. Air. Cf., line 624, below.

II. ii. 527. *Proof eterne*. Everlasting resistance.

II. ii. 537. *Jig*. Humorous song. This meaning existed alongside of the meaning of "dance." Cf. III. i. 151, and III. ii. 125.

II. ii. 540. *Mobled*. Muffled.

II. ii. 544. *Bisson rheum*. Blinding tears. *Bisson* properly means "near-sighted."

II. ii. 546. *O'er-teem'd*. "Exhausted by child-bearing" (Clar.).

II. ii. 555. *Milch*. Literally, "milk-giving"; here, "running with tears."

II. ii. 556. *Passion*. Feeling, suffering.

II. ii. 489-556. The turgid style of this speech and the favorable criticism of it put into the mouth of Hamlet have caused endless discussion. For the criticism, it is to be remembered that it is not spoken by Shakspeare in his own person. For the style of the speech, see Introduction, p. 42.

II. ii. 561. *Bestowed*. Lodged.

II. ii. 563. *Abstract*. Epitome. The reference in this passage is to the practice of dealing with contemporary events on the stage.

II. ii. 568. *God's bodykins*. An oath by the host in the Sacrament. Cf. II. ii. 621, note.

II. ii. 569. *After*. According to.

II. ii. 596. *Conceit*. Imagination.

II. ii. 598. *Aspect*. For accent, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

II. ii. 599. *Function*. Bodily action.

II. ii. 606. *General*. Cf. line 471, above.

II. ii. 607. *Free*. Innocent. Cf. III. ii. 239.

II. ii. 608. *Amaze*. Paralyze. A stronger word than it is to-day.

II. ii. 611. *Peak*. Mope.

II. ii. 612. *John-a-dreams*. A sleepy-headed fellow. *Unpregnant of*. Not keen in.

II. ii. 615. *Defeat*. Destruction. Cf. V. ii. 58.

II. ii. 621. *'Swounds*. By God's wounds, Cf. III. ii. 373.

II. ii. 622. *Pigeon-livered and lack gall.* The spirit of resentment and rancor was supposed to have its seat in the gall, and pigeons were believed to have none.

II. ii. 624. *Region.* Air. Cf. line 524, above, and I. iii. 133, note.

II. ii. 626. *Kindless.* Unnatural.

II. ii. 628. *Brave.* Making a fine show.

II. ii. 634. *About.* Turn your activity in another direction, set to work.

II. ii. 637. *Presently.* At once.

II. ii. 643. *Tent.* Probe. *Blench.* Flinch.

II. ii. 649. *Abuses.* Deceives. *Damn.* By leading' me to kill an innocent man.

II. ii. 650. *Relative.* Conclusive.

ACT III.

III. i. The present scene further exhibits Hamlet's speculative tendency in the soliloquy on suicide, and advances the plot by convincing the King that love is not at the bottom of Hamlet's conduct and arousing in him suspicion definite enough to lead him to resolve to get his nephew out of the country.

III. i. 1. *Drift of circumstance.* Round-about method. Cf. "drift of question," II. i. 10.

III. i. 2. *Puts on.* The king does not mean to imply that Hamlet's confusion of mind is pure pretense.

III. i. 12. *Disposition.* Mood.

III. i. 13. *Niggard of question.* Whether *question* is used for "discussion," or in the modern sense, Rosenkrantz's speech hardly agrees with the facts. He appears to be trying to put the best face possible upon the baffling of their attempts to draw Hamlet.

III. i. 14. *Assay.* Tempt.

III. i. 17. *O'er-raught.* Over-reached, overtook.

III. i. 26. *Edge.* Incitement.

III. i. 29. *Closely.* With secret purpose.

III. i. 31. *Affront.* Confront, meet.

III. i. 32. *Espials.* Spies.

III. i. 34. *Frankly.* Without prejudice.

III. i. 43. *Gracious.* Supply "lord."

III. i. 45. *Exercise.* Occupation. Cf. II. ii. 314. *Colour.* Give a pretext for.

III. i. 52. *To the thing,* etc. E. K. Chambers says, "to

the waiting-maid." But the next line shows that *to* = "compared with," hence "the thing that helps it" must be the paint. But the exact comparison would be between the unpainted and the painted cheek.

III. i. 53. *Painted*. Hypocritical.

III. i. 56-88. It is to be remembered that a soliloquy is not required to have the same continuity as a speech addressed to another. The sentences are naturally more or less ejaculatory—phrases thrown out at intervals to give a partial indication of the course of thought under the surface.

III. i. 65. *Rub*. An obstacle, in the game of bowls.

III. i. 67. *Coil*. Turmoil. There may be included in it the modern sense, and the use of *shuffle* suggests the specific idea of a snake's skin.

III. i. 68. *Respect*. Consideration.

III. i. 70. *Time*. The times.

III. i. 72. *Despised*. The Folios read "dispriz'd = unappreciated."

III. i. 74. *Takes*. Endures.

III. i. 75. *Quictus*. A law term for the settlement of a debt.

III. i. 76. *Bare*. Unsheathed, or mere. Cf. Richard II. I. iii 297. "Bare imagination of a feast." *Bodkin*. Small dagger. *Fardels*. Burdens. Ff inserts "these" before *fardels*.

III. i. 77. *Grunt*. In Shakspeare's time, a dignified word for "groan."

III. i. 79. *Bourn*. Limit, boundary.

III. i. 83. *Conscience*. Consciousness (of the risks just mentioned). This meaning suits the context best, and is common in older English. But cf. Richard III, I. iv. 138, "Conscience . . . makes a man a coward."

III. i. 84. *Native hue*. Ruddiness.

III. i. 85. *Thought*. Melancholy brooding, as often in Shakspeare.

II. i. 86. *Of great pitch and moment*. *Pitch* is the highest point of a hawk's flight, so the phrase = "of the highest importance." The Ff. reads "pith."

III. i. 103. *Honest*. Chaste.

III. i. 108. *No discourse with*. No one to have intercourse with.

III. i. 114. *Sometimes*. Formerly.

III. i. 120. *Relish*. Have a flavor.

III. i. 124. *Indifferent*. Cf. II. ii. 238, note.

III. i. 135. *At home*. Ophelia knows this is untrue.

III. i. 149. *Your*. The indefinite use. Hamlet's satire here is conventional, and he knows it does not apply to Ophelia and cannot hurt her.

III. i. 151-2. *Jig . . . amble*. Walk in an affected manner. Cf. II. ii. 537, note.

III. i. 152. *Nick-name*. Call by wrong names.

III. i. 153-54. *Make your wantonness*, etc. Pretend that you know no better when you really do it out of affectation.

III. i. 161. *Rose of the fair state*. Ornament of the state made fair by him.

III. i. 162. *Mould of form*. The model whom all imitate.

III. i. 164. *Deject*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 4, (d).

III. i. 168. *Blown*. In full bloom.

III. i. 169. *Ecstasy*. Madness.

III. i. 171. *Affections*. Mental state.

III. i. 175. *Disclose*. Chipping of the shell. Cf. V. i. 313.

III. i. 182. *Something-settled*. That has become somewhat firmly fixed.

III. i. 183. *Puts*. The whole preceding phrase is the subject.

III. i. 192. *Round*. Direct.

III. i. 194. *Find him*. Find out his secret.

III. ii. In this scene Hamlet carries his test of the King's guilt to a decisive issue. At the opening we find him laying down with admirable judgment the principles of the acted drama; next he confides the details of his plan to his chosen friend and asks his co-operation; then, as the court enters to witness the play, he conceals his rising excitement by resuming the pretense of madness; finally, when all doubt is past and he is left alone with Horatio, he gives way to an extreme nervous exhilaration which he carries through his interview with the courtiers who come to summon him to his mother.

III. ii. 6. *Use all*. Do everything.

III. ii. 9. *Temperance*. Restraint.

III. ii. 11. *Robustious*. Boisterous. *Periwig-pated*. Only actors wore wigs in Shakspeare's time.

III. ii. 13. *Gircundings*. Those who stood in the wit,

the cheapest part of the Elizabethan theatre.

III. ii. 14. *Capable of*. Supply "understanding."

III. ii. 16. *Termagant*. A deity falsely supposed to be worshipped by the Saracens. Like Herod, he was represented in the old Mysteries with great violence and bluster.

III. ii. 23. *Modesty*. Cf. II. ii. 475, V. i. 231.

III. ii. 24. *From*. Opposed to.

III. ii. 27. *Feature*. Shape, not merely of the face.

III. ii. 29. *His*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 3, (b). *Pressure*. Cf. I. v. 100.

III. ii. 30. *Come tardy off*. Weakly performed.

III. ii. 32. *Censure*. Opinion, judgment.

III. ii. 33. *In your allowance*. By your own admission.

III. ii. 39. *Nor man*. I. e., nor even man. The Ff. read "or Norman."

III. ii. 44. *Indifferently*. Cf. II. ii. 238, note.

III. ii. 53. *Fool*. Clown.

III. ii. 57. *Presently*. Immediately.

III. ii. 62. *Just*. Balanced.

III. ii. 63. *My conversation coped withal*. I have had intercourse with.

III. ii. 66. *Revenue*. The accent is on the middle syllable.

III. ii. 68. *Absurd*. For accent cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

III. ii. 69. *Pregnant*. Ready.

III. ii. 70. *Thrift*. Gain.

III. ii. 77. *Blood*. Impulse. Cf. I. iii. 6.

III. ii. 87. *Comment*. Power of observation, of making comment.

III. ii. 88. *Occulted*. Hidden.

III. ii. 89. *Unkennel*. Let loose, reveal. The *one speech* may mean that written by Hamlet, in which case *in* = "at"; or it may mean a single exclamation by the king.

III. ii. 92. *Stithy*. Blacksmith's shop.

III. ii. 95. *Censure*. Cf. I. iii. 69, III. ii. 32.

III. ii. 98. *Idle*. Foolish.

III. ii. 100. *Fares*. Hamlet, in his reply, puns on the word in the sense of "feeds on."

III. ii. 101-2. *Chameleon's dish*. The chameleon was believed to feed on air.

III. ii. 113. *Capitol*. Cæsar was assassinated not in the

Capitol, but in one of the porches about the Theatre of Pompey. Shakspeare makes this mistake in Julius Cæsar, III. i. 12, also.

III. ii. 125. *Jig-maker*. Cf. II. ii. 537, note.

III. ii. 131. *Sables*. Rich furs, not mourning.

III. ii. 138-39. "*The hobby-horse is forgot*." A proverbial phrase used to lament the good old times. The hobby-horse was a feature of the old May-games.

III. ii. 139. *The Dumb show*. This and the play that follows would be performed in a balcony at the back of the stage, which was occupied by spectators when not used by the actors. A question has been raised as to the object of the introduction of a dumb-show which so distinctly indicates the plot of the play. Some have held that Hamlet wished to give the king two chances to betray himself: others would have the king's attention diverted till the dialogue begins.

III. ii. 141. *Miching mallecho*. Sneaking mischief.

III. ii. 142. *Argument*. Story, plot.

III. ii. 148. *Posy*. Motto.

III. ii. 151. *Phœbus' cart*. The chariot of the sun.

Cart was a more dignified word then than now. Coleridge notes that just as the passage from "Æneas' tale to Dido" was distinguished from the dialogue in which it was set by its epic style, this interlude is marked off by rhyme, and, it may be added, by its archaic diction.

III. ii. 160. *Cheer*. Cheerfulness.

III. ii. 161. *Distrust*. Have fears for you.

III. ii. 163. *Hold quantity*. Are in proportion.

III. ii. 164. Either both absent or both extreme.

III. ii. 170. *Operant*. Active. *Leave*. Cease.

III. ii. 178. *Instances*. Motives.

III. ii. 179. *Respects of thrift*. Cf. III. i. 68, note.

III. ii. 188. *Necessary*. Inevitable [Clar.].

III. ii. 193. *Enactures*. Enactments. *Destroy*, the predicate of *violence*, is attracted by the plural *enactures*.

III. ii. 195. *On slender accident*. From slight cause.

III. ii. 199. *Whether*. Cf. Introduction, p. 43, 2.

III. ii. 205. *Seasons*. Matures.

III. ii. 214. *Desperation*. Despair.

III. ii. 215. *Anchor's cheer*. Anchorite's or hermit's fare. *Scope*. Limit.

III. ii. 216. *Blanks*. Blanches.

III. ii. 234. *Tropically*. Figuratively.

III. ii. 239. *Free*. Innocent. Cf. II. ii. 607.

III. ii. 241. *Our withers are unurung*. There is no sore on our shoulders.

III. ii. 243. *Chorus*. The speeches of the chorus were explanatory of the action of the play. Cf. Henry V, Romeo and Juliet, etc.

III. ii. 244. *Interpret*. The interpreter at a puppet show was the man who explained the meaning of the action.

III. ii. 248-49. "*The croaking raven*," etc. A line from an old play. There is a very similar passage in The True Tragedie of Richard the Third.

III. ii. 253. *Hecate's ban*. The curse of Hecate, the Queen of the lower regions.

III. ii. 255. *Usurp*. Exercise unlawfully, or violently.

III. ii. 267-70. The ballad from which this and the stanza, 278-81, are taken has not been identified.

III. ii. 271. *Feathers*. These seem to have been common in the stage head-dresses of the period.

III. ii. 272. *Turn Turk*. Change completely.

III. ii. 273. *Provincial roses*. Rosettes, the adjective being used in allusion to a well-known variety of roses. *Razed*. Slashed.

III. ii. 274. *Fellowship*. Partnership. Actors were paid not fixed salaries, but a proportion of the receipts at the doors. *Cry*. Company.

III. ii. 281. *Pajock*. This word, interpolated by Hamlet in what is presumably a quotation, is generally taken as a form of "peacock." This bird was supposed to be of very evil life, and the combination of this with its showy appearance may account for Hamlet's choice of it as a figure for his uncle.

III. ii. 289. *Recorders*. A kind of flageolet.

III. ii. 291. *Perdy*. A corruption of "par Dieu."

III. ii. 298. *Marvellous*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 5. (b). *Distempered*. Out of sorts.

III. ii. 300. *Choler*. Used both of anger and of its supposed cause, red bile.

III. ii. 301. *Should*. Cf. Abbott, §§322-328.

III. ii. 303. *Purgation*. A play upon the different meanings of the word: (1) Medical, purging of the body; (2) legal and theological, clearing of guilt.

III. ii. 306. *Frame*. Order.

III. ii. 313. *Wholesome. Sane.*

III. ii. 314. *Pardon. Leave to go.*

III. ii. 325. *Amazement and admiration. Extreme perplexity and wonder.*

III. ii. 329. *Closet. Cf. II. i. 76, note.*

III. ii. 332. *Trade. Business.*

III. ii. 336. *Pickers and stealers. Hands. The phrase is suggested by the church catechism which instructs to keep the hands "from picking and stealing."*

III. ii. 337. *Distemper. Cf. line 298, above.*

III. ii. 337-38. *Bar . . . liberty. Shut off the only means of freeing your mind from griefs.*

III. ii. 341. *Voice. Vote. Cf. V. ii. 373.*

III. ii. 344. *"While the grass grows." "The steed starves" is the rest of the proverb.*

III. ii. 346-47. *To withdraw with you. For this use of the infinitive, cf. III. iv. 216. The phrase has caused much controversy, but it seems to be addressed to Guildenstern, and to mean, "Let me take you apart."*

III. ii. 348. *Recover the wind. Get to the windward, as a hunter might, in order that the game might scent him and run into the toll.*

III. ii. 359. *Ventages. Holes.*

III. ii. 373. *'Sblood. By God's blood. Cf. II. ii. 621.*

III. ii. 376. *Frct. A pun on the two senses: (1) to worry: (2) to furnish with frets, the bars put on a stringed instrument to guide the fingering.*

III. ii. 389-90. *Top of my bent. The full extent of my inclination. Bent is a term in archery for the extent to which a bow may be bent, and so "limit of capacity." Cf. II. ii. 30.*

III. ii. 393. *Witching. When witchcraft has most power.*

III. ii. 399. *Nero murdered his mother, Agrippina.*

III. ii. 403. *Shent. Rebuked, hurt.*

III. ii. 404. *Give them seals. Confirm with deeds.*

III. iii. This is the crucial scene. The suspicions of the King are roused, and immediate action is necessary. Hamlet is fully convinced of the King's guilt, and an opportunity of achieving revenge offers. On the significance of Hamlet's reasons for letting this occasion slip, opinions have differed greatly. Some are shocked at the fiendishness of Hamlet's motives; others hold that it was quite in

keeping with the barbarity of the age, that he should not be content with a revenge that took merely blood for blood: still others regard it as a specious excuse used by Hamlet to cover his lack of resolution. In any case, from this point on till the catastrophe Hamlet ceases to control the action.

III. iii. 2. *You*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 3, (c).

III. iii. 4. *Shall along*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 4, (e).

III. iii. 5. *Terms of our estate*. Circumstances of our government.

III. iii. 7. The line as it stands in the text is an Alexandrine, unless we read *lunacies* as a dissyllable, and *We will* as "We'll." The Qq. read "browes" for *lunacies*.

III. iii. 11. *Single and peculiar*. Individual and private.

III. iii. 13. *Noyance*. Injury.

III. iii. 14-15. *Depends and rests the lives*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 4, (a).

III. iii. 15. *The cease of majesty*. The King dying.

III. iii. 16. *Gulf*. Whirlpool.

III. iii. 24. *Arm you*. Prepare yourselves. Cf. line 2, above.

III. iii. 28. *Convey*. Secrete.

III. iii. 29. *Process*. What goes on. *Tax him home*. Reprove him severely. Cf. III. iv. 1.

III. iii. 30. *As you said*. Cf. III. i. 193.

III. iii. 33. *Of vantage*. From a point of vantage.

III. iii. 36. *Offence*. Note the different meanings of this word in the present speech: (1) line 36, crime; (2) line 47, the offended party; (3) line 56, what is gained by the crime; (4) line 58, the offender.

III. iii. 37. *Primal eldest curse*. The curse of Cain.

III. iii. 38. For metre cf. Introduction, p. 44, 3.

III. iii. 39. 'Though my desire to pray amounts to an actual volition.

III. iii. 47, 56, 58. *Offence*. Cf. note on line 36. above.

III. iii. 57. *Currents*. Courses. Some editors read "'currents" = "occurrents."

III. iii. 58. *Gilded*. Full of gold for bribes.

III. iii. 61. *The action lies*, etc. A legal phrase. The action is brought before a court to be tried on its true merits.

III. iii. 63. *Even to the teeth*, etc. Face to face with.

III. iii. 64. *Rests*. Remains.

III. iii. 69. *Engaged*. 'Entangled.

III. iii. 75. *Would be scanned*. Ought to be considered.

III. iii. 80. *Grossly*. Without having his gross sins cleansed by confession and absolution. *Full of bread*. Not fasting.

III. iii. 81. *Flush*. Lusty.

III. iii. 83. *In our circumstances*, etc. Judging, as we must, from the circumstances, and according to our usual way of reasoning.

III. iii. 88. *Hent*. Seizing, time for being seized.

III. iii. 96. *This physic*. The purging by prayer.

III. iv. The death of Polonius, which is, from the point of view of the later development of the plot, the most important thing in the next scene, seems for the time a mere episode in the intensity of the interview between Hamlet and his mother. In the earlier form of the story, Hamlet wins over the Queen entirely, and she becomes his accomplice, thus giving the scene a greater structural importance.

III. iv. 1. *Straight*. At once. *Lay home*. Cf. III. iii. 29, note.

III. iv. 2. *Broad*. Beyond bounds, unrestrained.

III. iv. 4. *I'll silence me even here*. I'll stop talking at this point (though I could say more). With this reading it does not appear that the Queen knew that Polonius was to hide behind the arras. But Q₁ has, "I'll shroud myself behind the arras," and many editors have followed Hamner in changing *silence* to "sconce" = ensconce.

III. iv. 5. *Round*. Direct.

III. iv. 12. *Idle*. Frivolous.

III. iv. 13. *Question*. Talk.

III. iv. 15. *Rood*. Cross of Christ.

III. iv. 33. *Thy better*. The King, of course.

III. iv. 34. *Busy*. Meddlesome. Cf. "busybody."

III. iv. 35. *Leave*. Cease. Cf. line 67, below.

III. iv. 38. *Brazed*. Make brazen, hardened.

III. iv. 39. *Sense*. Sensibility, feeling.

III. iv. 45. *Blister*. Harlots were branded on the forehead.

III. iv. 47. *Contraction*. The marriage contract.

III. iv. 48. *Religion*. The religious element in the marriage contract.

III. iv. 50. *Solidity* . . . *mass*. The earth.

III. iv. 51. *Tristful*. Sad. *Against the doom*. At the approach of the judgment.

III. iv. 52. *Thought-sick*. Cf. III. i. 85, note.

III. iv. 53. *Index*. Beginning. The index used to be prefixed to a book.

III. iv. 54. *Picture*. Probably pointing to pictures or tapestry portraits hanging on the wall. Modern actors as a rule use miniatures.

III. iv. 57. *Hyperion's*. Cf. I. ii. 140, note. *Front*. Fore-head.

III. iv. 59. *Station*. Attitude.

III. iv. 67. *Leave*. Cf. III. iv. 35, note.

III. iv. 68. *Batten*. Feed. Used of beasts.

III. iv. 72. *Sense*. Cf. note on line 39, above.

III. iv. 73. *Motion*. Power of moving.

III. iv. 74. *Apoplexed*. Benumbed, paralyzed.

III. iv. 75. *Ecstasy*. Madness.

III. iv. 76. *Quantity of choice*. Degree of discrimination.

III. iv. 78. *Cozened*. Cheated. *Hoodman-blind*. Blind-man's bluff.

III. iv. 80. *Sans all*. Without the other four senses. *Sans* was for a time actually an English word.

III. iv. 82. *Mope*. Be dull.

III. iv. 87. *Compulsive*. Compelling. *Charge*. Impulse.

III. iv. 88. *Frost*. Old age.

III. iv. 89. *Will*. Appetite.

III. iv. 91. *Grained*. Stained permanently. Originally it meant dyed with "granum" or cochineal, which was a fast dye.

III. iv. 92. *Tinct*. Color.

III. iv. 97. *Vice*. The Fool in the old morality plays.

III. iv. 101. *Of shreds and patches*. Wearing the clown's motley.

Stage Direction. Q₁ has "Enter the Ghost in his night gown"; i. e., dressing gown.

III. iv. 103. *Figure*. Person.

III. iv. 106. *Lapsed*, etc. Having let time pass and passion cool.

III. iv. 107. *Important*. Which I should have regarded as important or urgent.

III. iv. 111. *Amazement*. Bewilderment. Cf. III. ii 325.

III. iv. 113. *Conceit*. Imagination.

III. iv. 120. *Excrements*. Excrescences, such as nails and hair. "As if the parts of the body that are without sensation had become alive."

III. iv. 126. *Capable*. Sensitive.

III. iv. 127-28. Lest you move me to pity instead of anger, so that I shall not perform the stern acts of revenge, and shed tears instead of blood, drops of the wrong color.

III. iv. 132. *Nor . . . nothing*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 5, (a).

III. iv. 137. *Ecstasy*. Cf. line 75, above.

III. iv. 144. *Flattering unction*. Soothing ointment.

III. iv. 150. *Compost*. Manure.

III. iv. 151. *This my virtue*. What my virtue compels me to say.

III. v. 152. *Pursy*. Shortwinded, and so "fat."

III. iv. 154. *Curb*. Kneel.

III. iv. 160-61. *Who . . . devil*. Who destroys all sensibility and is the devil of habit. Theobald amended *devil* to "evil" to bring out the two antitheses; "monster and angel"; "habits evil" and "actions fair and good." Lines 160-64 are omitted in the Folios.

III. iv. 164. *Aptly*. Readily.

III. iv. 168. *And either . . . the devil*. Q_2 and Q_3 have lost a word after *either*. Q_4 substitutes "master" for *either*, and some editors have kept both words. In either case the metre is unsatisfactory. Very many emendations have been proposed, such as "curb," "tame," "lay," etc., on the one hand, or "house," "raise," etc., on the other. The Folios omit the words, "the next . . . potency."

III. iv. 175. *Their*. The plural pronoun is common after "heaven," in Shakspeare.

III. iv. 176. *Bestow*. Stow away. Cf. II. ii. 561. *Answer*. Account for.

III. iv. 178. *Kind*. The obvious meaning is "kind to his mother" by leading her to repentance. "Natural" has been suggested, referring to his duty to his father.

III. iv. 181. *Not . . . no*. Cf. Introduction, p. 47, 5, (a).

III. iv. 182. *Bloat*. For the omission of "-ed," cf. Introduction, p. 47, 4, (d).

III. iv. 184. *Reechy*. Smoky, and so "filthy."

III. iv. 186. *Ravel*. For "unravel," disentangle, disclose.

III. iv. 190. *Paddock*. Toad. *Gib*. A tom-cat, from "Gilbert."

III. iv. 191. *Such' dear concernings*. What concerns him so intimately. Cf. IV. iii. 44.

III. iv. 194. *The famous ape*. The story alluded to has been lost.

III. iv. 195. *Conclusions*. What the result will be: experiments.

III. iv. 203. *Fanged*. Not a participle, but an adjective = "furnished with fangs." Cf. Macbeth, III. i. 95. "The valued file" = "the list with values attached." Cf. I. i. 25, 63.

III. iv. 206. *Enginer*. Cf. "pionier," I. v. 162.

III. iv. 207. *Hoist*. Cf. line 182, above. *Petar*. A kind of bomb.

III. iv. 211. *Packing*. Hurrying off. It is also used in the sense of "plotting."

III. iv. 212. *Guts*. A less offensive word than now.

III. iv. 216. *To draw*, etc. Cf. III. ii. 346-47, note.

ACT IV.

The whole of this act shows the importance for the plot of the death of Polonius. It strengthens the King in his schemes for getting rid of Hamlet, it causes the madness of Ophelia, and it accounts for the wrath of Laertes which finally brings about the catastrophe.

IV. i. The first scene shows the effect on the King.

IV. i. 1. *Profound*. For accent, cf. Introduction, p. 44, 6.

IV. i. 11. *Brainish apprehension*. Crazy notion.

IV. i. 13. *Us*. The plural of royalty, referring, of course, to the King alone.

IV. i. 16. *Answered*. Cf. III. iv. 176, note.

IV. i. 18. *Short*. On a short tether. *Haunt*. Society.

IV. i. 22. *Divulging*. Active for passive.

IV. i. 25. *Ore*. Precious ore.

IV. i. 26. *Mineral*. Mine.

IV. i. 40. [*So, haply, slander.*] These are the words most commonly inserted by editors to supply an obvious gap in the text.

IV. i. 41. *Diameter*. The world is here thought of as a flat expanse, so that diameter means a line across it, not through a sphere.

IV. i. 42. *Level*. Direct. Cf. IV. v. 140. *Blank*. The white spot in the centre of the target.

IV. i. 44. *Woundless*. Invulnerable. Cf. "Sightless," invisible, Macbeth, I. vii. 23.

IV. ii. 11. *Demanded of*. Questioned by.

IV. ii. 12. *Replication*. Reply.

IV. ii. 15. *Countenance*. Favor.

IV. ii. 31. *Nothing*. No account. Hamlet is talking deliberate nonsense.

IV. ii. 31-2. *Hide fox*. Probably a phrase from a children's game.

IV. iii. 4. *Distracted*. Crazy, without judgment.

IV. iii. 5. *In*. With. Cf. Introduction, p. 48.

IV. iii. 7. *Bear*. Carry out. Cf. I. iii. 67.

IV. iii. 21. *Politic*. Appropriate to the character of a statesman.

IV. iii. 22. *Your*. Cf. I. v. 167. note.

IV. iii. 26. *Variable service*. Different courses, but for the same eater.

IV. iii. 34. *Progress*. A royal journey.

IV. iii. 44. *Tender*. Regard. *Dearly*. Heartily. Cf. III. iv. 191.

IV. iii. 47. *At help*. Cf. "at foot," line 57, below.

IV. iii. 48. *Tend*. Cf. I. iii. 83.

IV. iii. 60. *That else leans on the affair*. That the affair depends on. For this reversal of modern idiom, cf. As You Like It, V. iv. 192, "You to your former honour I bequeath."

IV. iii. 61. *England*. The king of England. Cf. "Denmark," I. i. 48.

IV. iii. 63. *Since yet thy cicatrice*, etc. Since the mark of the damage inflicted by the Danish armies is still visible.

IV. iii. 64. *Free*. Not enforced by the actual presence of armies.

IV. iii. 65. *Coldly set*. Regard with indifference.

IV. iii. 66. *Process*. Mandate.

IV. iii. 67. *Congruing*. Agreeing. The Ff. read "conjuring."

IV. iii. 68. *Present*. Immediate.

IV. iii. 69. *Hectic*. Fever.

IV. iv. The function of Fortinbras, who first appears in this scene, is twofold: (1) to afford a contrast of character to Hamlet; (2) to perform the function of making the last speech and taking charge of the state at the end, matters always performed in Elizabethan tragedy by a person of high, and if possible, royal rank.

IV. iv. 3. *Conveyance*. Convoy, escort.

IV. iv. 6. *Eye*. Presence.

IV. iv. 8. *Softly*. Slowly.

IV. iv. 15. *Main*. Main body.

IV. iv. 20. *Farm*. Rent (not "cultivate").

IV. iv. 22. *Ranker rate*. A greater price. *In fee*. In absolute possession.

IV. iv. 26. *Will not debate*. Will not be enough to fight out.

IV. iv. 27. *Imposthume*. Abscess.

IV. iv. 32. *Inform against*. Tell against, accuse.

IV. iv. 34. *Market*. What he sells it for.

IV. iv. 36. *Discourse*. Power of reasoning.

IV. iv. 37. *Looking before and after*. I.e., in reasoning. looking *before* to the premises, and *after* to the conclusion.

IV. iv. 39. *Fust*. Grow mouldy.

IV. iv. 41. *Event*. Outcome.

IV. iv. 46. *Gross*. Palpable, obvious.

IV. iv. 47. *Charge*. Cost.

IV. iv. 49. *Puffed*. Insplied.

IV. iv. 54. *Argument*. Cause. There has been much discussion on lines 54-6. The thought is, "Real greatness consists, not in fighting on the slightest provocation, but in finding any provocation great if honor is involved."

IV. iv. 61. *Trick of fame*. Trifling whim about reputation.

IV. iv. 64. *Continent*. In the literal sense of "that which contains."

IV. v. The consequences of the killing of Polonius are further developed in this scene, the madness of Ophelia being not only a result of her father's death, but also an additional incitement to Laertes to revenge.

IV. v. 2. *Distract*. Mad. Cf. Introduction, p. 47. 4. (d). In the Fl. the two speeches of the Gentleman are given to Horatio, and Horatio's lines 14-16 are given to the Queen. This re-arrangement is probably due merely to the desire to reduce the number of actors.

IV. v. 6. *Spurns enviously*. Kicks maliciously. *Straws*. Trifles. Cf. IV. iv. 55.

IV. v. 9. *Collection*. Inference. *Aim*. Guess.

IV. v. 10. *Botch*. Patch.

IV. v. 11. *Yield*. Present, furnish.

IV. v. 15. *Ill-breeding*. That naturally produce evil thoughts.

IV. v. 18. *Toy*. Trifle. *Amiss*. Disaster.

IV. v. 19. *Artless*. Unskilful, defeating its own ends. *Jealousy*. Suspicion.

IV. v. 20. *Spills*. Destroys.

IV. v. 23 ff. This and the other verses sung by Ophelia are not supposed to have been written by Shakspeare.

IV. v. 25. *Cockle hat*. A hat with a cockle shell as a sign that the wearer has been abroad on pilgrimage. "While this kind of devotion was in favor, love intrigues were carried on under this mask" (Warburton, quoted by Var).

IV. v. 26. *Shoon*. This plural still exists in dialect.

IV. v. 38. *Larded*. Decorated.

IV. v. 42. *'Ild*. Yield, reward. *The owl*. The reference, as explained by Douce, is to a legend according to which Christ went into a baker's shop and asked for bread. The baker's daughter reproved her mother for too great generosity, and was transformed into an owl.

IV. v. 46. *Conceit upon*. Thought of.

IV. v. 65. *This is*. One syllable, metrically.

IV. v. 70. *Muddied*. Stirred up, perturbed.

IV. v. 72. *Greenly*. Immaturely, and so "foolishly."

IV. v. 73. *Hugger-mugger*. Secret haste.

IV. v. 42. *'Ild*. Yield, reward. *The owl*. The reference his own speculations (instead of finding out the facts), and keeps his intentions secret.

IV. v. 79. *Buzzers*. Whisperers.

IV. v. 81. *Necessity . . . beggared*. They, compelled to say something, but lacking facts.

IV. v. 82. *Our*. Cf. IV. i. 13, note.

IV. v. 84. *Murdering-piece*. A piece of ordnance which fired many missiles at once.

IV. v. 86. *Switzers*. Body-guard of mercenaries.

IV. v. 88. *Overpeering of his list*. Overflowing its boundary.

IV. v. 90. *In*. With. Cf. Introduction, p. 48 *Head*. Armed force.

IV. v. 99. *Counter*. A hunting term used of a hound running in the contrary direction.

IV. v. 107. *Brands*. Cf. III. iv. 45, note.

IV. v. 111. *Fear*. Cf. I. iii. 51.

IV. v. 113. *Peep to*. Look at, used contemptuously.

IV. v. 121. *Conscience and grace*. Morals and religion.

IV. v. 123. *Both the worlds*. Here and hereafter.

IV. v. 131. *Swoopstake*. Indiscriminately. *Draw*. I. e., to destruction.

IV. v. 135. *Pelican*. The pelican was supposed to feed its young thus.

IV. v. 139. *Sensibly*. Keenly.

IV. v. 140. *Level*. Cf. IV. i. 42, note.

IV. v. 144. *Virtue*. Power, faculty.

IV. v. 150. *Fine*. Delicate. Lines 150-52 are lacking in Q₂.

IV. v. 151. *Instance*. Example, and so "part;" here, her sanity, which she has sent after her father.

IV. v. 161. *'How the wheel becomes it*. We reverse the idiom: "how well it [the song] goes to the spinning wheel." Cf. IV. vii. 79.

IV. v. 163. *Matter*. Sense. The general sense is, "This pathetic nonsense is more moving than rational talk would be."

IV. v. 167. *Document in madness*. A lesson given in madness.

IV. v. 171ff. Many editors attempt to decide to which person Ophelia gives each flower, and to explain its appropriateness. But this is merely speculative.

IV. v. 172. *With a difference*. With a different signification.

IV. v. 177. *Thought*. Cf. III. i. 85, note. *Passion*. Suffering.

IV. v. 178. *Favour*. Beauty. Cf. "ill favored," "well-favored."

IV. v. 193. *Whom your wisest*. Whomsoever of your wisest.

IV. v. 195. *Collateral*. Indirect.

IV. v. 196. *Touched*. Implicated. (Clar.)

IV. v. 203. *Hatchment*. Escutcheon.

IV. v. 204. *Formal ostentation*. Customary ceremony.

IV. v. 205. *From heaven*. Where Polonius is now.

IV. vi. The gap in time during which the events related

in Hamlet's letter took place may be supposed to come between scenes iv. and v., since scene vi. evidently follows close on scene iv.

IV. vi. 14. *Means*. Means of access.

IV. vi. 21-22. *Thieves of mercy*. Merciful thieves. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (a).

IV. v. 27. *Bore*. Calibre. The figure is from gunnery; the charge is too light for the weight of the shot, i. e., words are incapable of expressing the seriousness of the matter.

IV. vii. The King's villany has been progressive. At the beginning he was guilty of adultery and murder, but his conscience was not yet seared, and he was not hostile towards Hamlet. But as he becomes aware of Hamlet's suspicions he first plans to get him out of Denmark, then to have him put to death in England; and now he shamelessly plots a murder of the most dishonorable kind. Laertes, who at the beginning was merely a gay youth, now, under cover of filial piety, becomes the agent of a dastardly conspiracy. The opposing forces which began to take the lead immediately after Hamlet missed his chance in III. iii. are now uniting to close in on the hero.

IV. vii. 1. *Now*. In the interval since scene v, the King has given Laertes his account of Hamlet's conduct.

IV. vii. 6. *Feats*. Deeds.

IV. vii. 7. *Capital*. Involving loss of life.

IV. vii. 8. *As*. Since.

IV. vii. 9. *Mainly*. Powerfully.

IV. vii. 14. *Conjunctive*. Closely united.

IV. vii. 15. *Star*. Cf. I. v. 17, note. *His*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 3, (b).

IV. vii. 17. *Count*. Account.

IV. vii. 18. *General gender*. Common people.

IV. vii. 21. *Gyves*. Cf. II. i. 79, note.

IV. vii. 26. *Terms*. Condition.

IV. vii. 27. *Go back again*—to what she was.

IV. vii. 28. *On mount of*. On top of, standing on an elevation and challenging all the world.

IV. vii. 32. *With*. By. Cf. Introduction, p. 45.

IV. vii. 45. *Eyes*. Cf. IV. iv. 6, note.

IV. vii. 46. *Pardon*. Cf. II. ii. 314, note.

IV. vii. 50. *Abuse*. Deceit.

IV. vii. 52. *Character*. Handwriting.

- IV. vii. 63. *Checking at.* Refusing to pursue. *Thor.*
Used instead of repeating "if." Cf. IV. vii. 160.
- IV. vii. 68. *Uncharge.* Acquit. *Practice.* Plot.
- IV. vii. 71. *Organ.* Instrument.
- IV. vii. 73. *Quality.* Accomplishment.
- IV. vii. 74. *Parts.* Qualities, abilities.
- IV. vii. 77. *Siege.* Seat (at table), and so, "rank."
- IV. vii. 79. *Becomes.* Cf. IV. v. 161, note.
- IV. vii. 81. *Sables.* Cf. III. ii. 131, note.
- IV. vii. 82. *Importing health and graveness.* Carrying with them health (warmth) and dignity.
- IV. vii. 85. *Can.* Note the absolute use.
- IV. vii. 88. *Incorpsed.* Of one body with.
- IV. vii. 90. *Forgery.* Imagination.
- IV. vii. 94. *Brooch.* Ornament.
- IV. vii. 101. *Scrimers.* Fencers
- IV. vii. 113. *Passages of proof.* Instances in experience.
- IV. vii. 114. *Qualifies.* Moderates.
- IV. vii. 117. *Still.* Always.
- IV. vii. 118. *Plurisy.* Excess.
- IV. vii. 123. *Spendthrift sigh.* It was believed that sighing drew the blood from the heart.
- IV. vii. 128. *Sanctuarize.* Give sanctuary to, protect.
- IV. vii. 132. *Put on.* Instigate.
- IV. vii. 135. *Remiss.* Careless, unsuspicious.
- IV. vii. 136. *Contriving.* Plotting.
- IV. vii. 139. *Unbated.* Unblunted. *Pass of practice.* A treacherous thrust. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (a).
- IV. vii. 142. *Mountebank.* Quack.
- IV. vii. 144. *Cataplasm.* Poultice.
- IV. vii. 145. *Simples.* The single elements of which drugs are compounded.
- IV. vii. 148. *Gall.* Wound superficially.
- IV. vii. 150-51. Consider what time and means will be convenient that we may play the parts we are to assume.
- IV. vii. 152. *That.* Cf. line 63, above. *Drift.* Intention.
- IV. vii. 155. *Blast in proof.* Burst in the test, like a cannon.
- IV. vii. 160. *That.* Used instead of repeating "when." Cf. line 63, note, above.
- IV. vii. 161. *For the nonce.* For then once, for the occasion.

- IV. vii. 162. *Stuck*. Thrust.
 IV. vii. 167. *There is a willow grows*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 3, (e).
 IV. vii. 171. *Liberal*. Free-spoken.
 IV. vii. 174. *Envious*. Malignant.
 IV. vii. 179. *Incapable*. Insensible.
 IV. vii. 180. *Indued*. Endowed with properties suited to. (Malone in Var.)
 IV. vii. 188. *Our trick*. A way we have.
 IV. vii. 189. *These*. I. e., tears.
 IV. vii. 192. *Douts*. Does out, puts out. Cf. I. iv. 37,

ACT V.

V. i. This scene with the clowns is perhaps the most famous instance of Shakspeare's use of comedy for the purpose of contrast with an intensely tragic scene. Cf. the Porter scene in *Macbeth*, II. iii. *Clown* is of course used in the sense of "rustic."

V. i. 2. *Salvation*. Probably for "damnation." Throughout, the gravediggers' humor depends largely on the trick, frequently used by Shakspeare, of making them use words opposite in meaning to their intention.

V. i. 4. *Straight*. Cf. II. ii. 464. III. iv. 1, note.

V. i. 9. "*Se offendendo*." "Se defendendo," in defending oneself, is meant. His idea is that to drown oneself in self-defense is not suicide, just as to kill in self-defense is not murder.

V. i. 13. *Argal*. Meant for "ergo."

V. i. 25. *Crowner's quest*. Coroner's inquest.

V. i. 29. *There thou say'st*. Now you are speaking truth.

V. i. 30. *Countenance*. Favor, authority.

V. i. 32. *Even*. Fellow.

V. i. 33. *Is . . . gentlemen*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 4, (a).

V. i. 35. *Adam's profession*. The allusion is to the old rhyme,

"When Adam delved and Eve span,
 Who was then the gentleman?"

V. i. 52. *Does well*. I. e., as an answer.

V. i. 59. *Unyoke*. Quit work.

V. i. 68. *Yaughan*. Probably the keeper of an ale house.

Stoup. Can.

V. i. 69ff. This song was written by Lord Vaux, and was published in Tottel's Miscellany (published 1557).

V. i. 71. *Contract*. Shorten. *Behove*. Behoof, advantage. *O* and *a* indicate the breath panting out as he uses his pick-ax.

V. i. 75-6. *Property of casiness*. Cf. Introduction, p. 45, 1, (a).

V. i. 78. *Daintier sense*. I. e., than the hand calloused by rough work.

V. i. 81. *Intil*. Into. Still used in Scotland.

V. i. 84. *Jowls*. Knocks.

V. i. 87. *Politician*. Schemer.

V. i. 98. *Chapless*. Jawless. *Mazzard*. Head.

V. i. 100. *Trick*. Skill.

V. i. 102. *Loggats*. A game, somewhat of the nature of quoits, played with pieces of wood.

V. i. 109. *Quiddities*. "Quiddity" originally meant the real nature of a thing, but from its use in scholastic discussion came to mean "subtlety," "quibble." *Quillets* means the same thing and may be a form of the same word. (N. E. D.).

V. i. 112. *Sconce*. Head (disrespectful).

V. i. 115-16. *Statutes*, *recognizances*, *fincs*, *vouchers*, *recoveries*. These are all technical terms in connection with the sale of land. For meanings, cf. Var. I. 387.

V. i. 117. *Fine*. End.

V. i. 124. *Inheritor*. Possessor.

V. i. 139. *Quick*. A play on the two senses, "living" and "fast." Cf. V. i. 276.

V. i. 150. *Absolute*. Insisting on absolute perfection.

V. i. 151. *By the card*. By compass or chart, i. e., by rule. Cf. V. ii. 113. *Equivocation*. Ambiguity.

V. i. 154. *Picked*. Precise, refined.

V. i. 156. *Kibe*. Chilblain.

V. i. 167. *A*. A dialect form of "he," common in rustic or familiar speech in Elizabethan plays.

V. i. 179. *Thirty years*. This makes Hamlet thirty. But at the beginning of the play it is clear that Shakspeare thinks of him as much younger. Such inconsistencies in the reckoning of time are common in Shakspeare, who in such matters cares, only for dramatic effect.

V. i. 184. *You*. Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 3, (d).

V. i. 188. *Your*. For other instances of this impersonal use, cf. I. v. 167, note.

V. i. 198. *Yorick*. Probably "Jörg," the Danish of "George."

V. i. 213. *Chop-fallen*. "Chap-fallèn," the modern spelling, usually means "with the lower jaw dropped in dejection." Here there is probably a play on the literal sense of "fallen away."

V. i. 215. *Favour*. Appearance.

V. i. 228. *Curiously*. Exquisitely, fantastically.

V. i. 231. *Modesty*. Cf. II. ii. 475, note; III. ii. 23.

V. i. 237. *Imperious*. Imperial.

V. i. 240. *Flaw*. Gust of wind.

V. i. 244. *Maimed*. Incomplete.

V. i. 246. *Fordo*. Destroy. *It*. Cf. I ii. 216, note.

V. i. 252. *Warranty*. Warrant, permission. *Doubtful*.

I. e., whether accident or suicide.

V. i. 253. The order of the king had overruled ecclesiastical law.

V. i. 256. *Shards*. Fragments (of pottery).

V. i. 257. *Crants*. A garland, such as was hung over the grave of a virgin. The Folios read "rites," a change made probably because the word was not generally familiar.

V. i. 258. *Maiden strewnments*. Cf. lines 369-71. *Bringing home* is the phrase used of a bride, here, as Clar. says, "sadly parodied in the funeral service."

V. i. 263. *Peace-parted souls*. Souls that have departed without violence.

V. i. 273. *Ingenious sense*. Keen mind.

V. i. 276. *Quick*. Cf. V. i. 139, and line 305, below.

V. i. 282. *Wandering stars*. Planets.

V. i. 284ff. The conduct of Hamlet in the remainder of this scene is perhaps more puzzling than anywhere else in the play. The explanation that he is keeping up the pretence of madness will hardly hold, as it is not necessary for him to come forward at all. We can only suppose that the sudden revival of his old affection for Ophelia drives him to a pitch of excitement so tremendous that he is barely master of himself. Cf. also V. ii. 79-80. "The bravery of his grief did put me into a towering passion."

V. i. 287. *Splenitive*. Governed by my spleen, the supposed seat of anger.

V. i. 293. *Wag*. For another instance of the use of this word without its modern undignified associations, cf. III. iv. 40.

V. i. 301. *Woo't*. A colloquial abbreviation of "wolt" = "wilt," used in contempt of Laertes.

V. i. 302. *Eisel*. Vinegar.

V. i. 309. *An*. If.

V. i. 310. *Mere*. Pure.

V. i. 313. *Her golden couplets*. Her two golden-yellow nestlings. *Disclosed*. Hatched.

V. i. 320. *In*. By recollection of.

V. i. 321. *Present push*. Immediate test.

V. i. 323. *Living monument*. Apparently a threat against the life of Hamlet.

V. ii. 6. *Mutines*. Mutineers. *Bilboes*. Long iron bars with fetters attached, used on board ship for rebellious sailors.

V. ii. 9. *Pall*. Become ineffective.

V. ii. 10-11. Though we may roughly plan out our line of action, there is a Providence that definitely shapes it.

V. ii. 20. *Larded*. Decorated. Cf. IV. v. 38. *Several*. Separate.

V. ii. 21. *Importing*. Having as their purport.

V. ii. 22. *Bugs*. Terrors, bug-bears. *In my life*. "In my continuing to live." (Clar.)

V. ii. 23. *Supervise*. Sight. *Bated*. Subtracted—from the promptness of the execution of the orders.

V. ii. 30. *Make a prologue*, etc. Without any preliminaries, my brains at once devised a plan.

V. ii. 33. *Statists*. Statesmen.

V. ii. 34. *Baseness*. Beneath a gentleman.

V. ii. 36. *Yeoman's service*. I. e., substantial, though humble, service. Cf. Harrison in Holinshed's Chronicle: "These [yeomen] were they that in times past made all France afraid. And albeit they be not called 'Master,' as gentlemen are, or 'Sir,' as to knights appertaineth, but only 'John' and 'Thomas,' etc., yet have they been found to have done very good service. The kings of England in foughten battles were wont to remain among them (who were their footmen) as the French kings did amongst their horsemen, the prince thereby showing where his chief strength did consist."

V. ii. 42. *Comma*. As a link, *comma* being used in contrast to a full-stop, which would represent division. *Amities*. Friendships.

V. ii. 43. *As-es of great charge*. *Charge*=burden. For

the pun on "as" and "ass." cf. *Twelfth Night*, II. iii. 183-5:

Sir And. And your horse now would make him
an ass.

Mar. Ass, I doubt not.

V. ii. 48. *Ordinant.* Ordaining.

V. ii. 50. *Model.* Duplicate.

V. ii. 56. *Go to't.* I. e., to their death.

V. ii. 57. *Make love to.* Woo, seek ardently.

V. ii. 58. *Defeat.* Destruction. Cf. I. ii. 19, note; II.
ii. 615.

V. ii. 59. *Insinuation.* Interference, officiousness.

V. ii. 61. *Pass.* Thrust.

V. ii. 62. *Opposites.* Opponents.

V. ii. 63. *Thinks 't thee.* Seems it to thee. This is the
Anglo-Saxon verb *thincan*, to seem. preserved in "methinks."
Stand me now upon. Be obligatory upon me. The construc-
tion is resumed in line 68, after the parenthesis.

V. ii. 65. *Election.* I. e., to the throne.

V. ii. 66. *Proper.* Own.

V. ii. 67. *Cozenage.* Deceit, trickery.

V. ii. 68. *Quit.* Requite.

V. ii. 69. *Canker.* Ulcer, corruption.

V. ii. 70. *In.* Into. Cf. Introduction, p. 48.

V. ii. 79. *Bravery.* Swagger.

V. ii. 88. *Chough.* The word *chough* meaning "jack-
daw," and so "chatterer" is sometimes confused with "chuff"
= "boor," "churl," "miser," and both are found in Shakspeare.
The first sense suits Osric's character, but not the imme-
diate context; the second, "a wealthy churl," suits the con-
text, but not Osric's character. The general sense of the
speech is that Osric owes his place at court to his landed
property, not to his personal worth.

V. ii. 111. *Differences.* Qualities marking him off from
the run of men. The language of this speech and the next
is a burlesque of fashionable affectations. *Of very soft
society.* Pleasant to associate with.

V. ii. 112. *Great showing.* Fine appearance.

V. ii. 113. *Card.* Chart or compass and so "guide."
Cf. V. i. 151. *Calendar.* List of seasons, and so "one who
sets the fashion season by season."

V. ii. 114. *Gentry.* Gentility. *Continent.* That which
comprises, the sum and substance.

V. ii. 116. *Definement* Description. *Perdition.* Loss.

V. ii. 118-19. *Dizzy the arithmetic of memory.* Confuse one who tried to remember and sum up all his qualities.

V. ii. 119. *Yet but yaw neither.* This has not been satisfactorily explained, and may be corrupt. *Yaw* is a nautical term, used of a ship that does not make a straight course, and does not answer her helm. The general sense may be that an attempt to exhaust the qualities of Laertes would make one dizzy and would yet fail to overtake them all, as a yawing craft might fail to overtake a quick sailer.

V. ii. 120-21. *In the verity of extolment.* To extol him truthfully.

V. ii. 122. *Article.* Content, substance. *Infusion.* "Infused temperament. Character imparted by nature." (N. E. D.)

V. ii. 124. *His semblable.* 'The only thing like him.

V. ii. 125. *Tract.* Follow. *Umbrage.* Shadow.

V. ii. 127. *The concernancy?* What is this all about?

V. ii. 128. *More rawer.* Cf. Introduction, p. 46, 2, and II. i. 11.

V. ii. 130. *Is't not possible,* etc. Can't you understand your own kind of language when spoken by another? You can if you try, sir.

V. ii. 132. *Nomination.* Mention.

V. ii. 140. *Approve.* Commend.

V. ii. 144. *Compare.* Presume to rival.

V. ii. 145-46. *To know a man well,* etc. "No man can completely know another but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom," (Johnson, quoted in Var.).

V. ii. 148. *Imputation.* Reputation. *Meed.* Merit.

V. ii. 155. *Imponed.* Staked.

V. ii. 156. *Assigns.* Appendages.

V. ii. 157. *Hanger.* Strap for attaching the sword to the girdle.

V. ii. 158. *Responsive to.* Matching well.

V. ii. 159. *Delicate.* Fine

V. ii. 159-60. *Of very liberal conceit.* Generously conceived, designed to suit a gentleman's taste.

V. ii. 162. *Edified by the margin.* Instructed by an explanation in the margin.

V. ii. 165. *Germane.* Related, fit.

V. ii. 175-76. *Twelve for nine.* The terms of the bet as stated by Osric are unintelligible. The main point is that,

Laertes being considered the better fencer, Hamlet is allowed substantial odds.

V. ii. 178. *Answer*. Acceptance. Hamlet plays on the other meaning, "reply."

V. ii. 183-84. *Breathing time of day*. Time for exercise.

V. ii. 196. *Lapwing*. Used here as the type of absurd precocity and forwardness.

V. ii. 198. *Comply*. Compliment, use ceremony with. Cf. II. ii. 360.

V. ii. 201-2. *Tune . . . encounter*. The fashionable way of speaking and the mere external tricks of conversation.

V. ii. 202-3. *Yesty collection*. Collection of frothy knowledge.

V. ii. 203. *Carries them through*. Wins them the approval of.

V. ii. 204. *Fond*. Foolish. Warburton reads "fanned" = "winnowed," and is followed by many editors. *Winnowed*. Select, exquisite.

V. ii. 211. *That*. Cf. IV. vii. 63.

V. ii. 213. *Fitness speaks*. Convenience summons.

V. ii. 218. *In happy time*. A conventional phrase of politeness.

V. ii. 219-20. *Gentle entertainment*. Gracious treatment.

V. ii. 231. *Gain-giving*. Misgiving. Hamlet is expressing merely a vague presentiment.

V. ii. 236. *Augury*. Omens.

V. ii. 240-42. The passage is corrupt. Q₂ reads, "Since no man of ought he leaves, knowes what ist to leave betimes." F₁ reads, "Since no man has't ought of what he leaves. What is't to leave betimes?" The reading in the text is Johnson's, and means, "Since no man knows what the future may have held in store for him, what does it matter if he dies young?"

V. ii. 242. *Let be*. Never mind.

V. ii. 250. *Exception*. Disapproval, dislike.

V. ii. 251. *Madness*. Here Hamlet lies, but the main idea of the speech, that he did not intentionally kill Polonius, is, of course, true enough.

V. ii. 261-62. *So far . . . that*. So far . . . as to think that.

V. ii. 263. *In nature*. As far as natural feeling goes.

V. ii. 265. *Terms*. Technical grounds.

V. ii. 268-69. *I have . . . ungored*. I receive an opin-

ion backed by precedent that I may make peace with you without hurting my honor.

V. ii. 276. *Stick fiery off*. "Stand in brilliant relief." (Clar.)

V. ii. 280. *The odds*. The greater stake.

V. ii. 282. *Bettered*. Improved. Odds. Advantage in points.

V. ii. 288. *Quit*. Pay him off. Cf. V. ii. 68.

V. ii. 291. *Union*. A fine pearl.

V. ii. 294. *Kettle*. Kettle-drum.

V. ii. 307. *Fat*. Probably here merely "out of training." There is a theory that this was inserted with reference to the personal appearance of Burbage, who first acted the part.

V. ii. 308. *Napkin*. Handkerchief.

V. ii. 310. *Good madam!* Said in acknowledgment of the health.

V. ii. 319. *Wanton*. Literally, "a spoiled child."

V. ii. 326. *A woodcock to mine own springe*. This bird is used as a decoy, and is here referred to as being caught in the trap into which it is meant to betray others. Cf. I. iii. 115, note.

V. ii. 337. *Unbated*. Unblunted. *Practice*. Plot.

V. ii. 346. *Union*. Hamlet's use of the word is ironical, as he now knows that the pretended pearl was really poison.

V. ii. 348. *Tempered*. Mixed.

V. ii. 356. There is an ellipsis here. "Had I but time—but I have not, since this fell sergeant," etc. Cf. Abbott, § 110.

V. ii. 367. *Absent*. Cf. Introduction. *Felicity*. Heaven.

V. ii. 373. *O'er-crows my spirit*. Triumphs over my vital forces.

V. ii. 376. *Voice*. Vote. Cf. III. ii. 341, and line 412, below.

V. ii. 377. *Occurrents*. Events.

V. ii. 378. *Solicited*. Prompted. (The sentence is unfinished.)

V. ii. 384. *Quarry*. Properly used of the animal hunted: here, the heap of slain. *Cries on*. Exclaims. *Haroc*. Indiscriminate slaughter. This has been interpreted, "This heap of slain calls out for vengeance," but the sense seems rather to be, "These bodies proclaim loudly a terrible slaughter."

V. ii. 385. *Toward*. In preparation.

V. ii. 395. *Jump*. Exactly. Cf. I. i. 65. *Question*. Affair, controversy.

V. ii. 403. *Put on*. Incited to, and so "caused." *Forced*. Not properly justified or inevitable. The reference is to the killing of Hamlet by Laertes.

V. ii. 409. *Of memory*. Which must be remembered.

V. ii. 413. *Presently*. Immediately.

V. ii. 415. *On*. Founded on, or, better, "in addition to."

V. ii. 417. *Put on*. Tested.

V. ii. 418. *Proved most royally*. Turned out as a king should. *Passage*. Bearing off the body.

The last speech here as in Shakspeare's other tragedies is uttered by the man of highest rank surviving, in whose hands the conduct of affairs is left. The anti-climax with which the scene ends is due to the absence of a curtain on the Elizabethan stage. A modern dramatist would close the play with the curtain at line 378, but Shakspeare was forced to arrange for the exit of the actors who took the parts of the characters whose bodies are left on the stage.

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APPENDIX

(Adapted, and enlarged, from the *Manual for the Study of English Classics*, by George L. Marsh)

HELPS TO STUDY

THE DRAMA

In what did the drama originate?

Describe briefly the miracle plays, or "mysteries," telling where they were performed, by whom, and what, in general, was their subject matter (pp. 20-22).

What elements were contained in the miracle plays that had an influence toward the development of comedy?

What were moralities? Interludes?

What foreign influences contributed to the development of the Elizabethan drama (pp. 23-25)?

Name several of Shakspeare's predecessors in the drama. Who was the greatest of them?

Describe briefly the theater of Shakspeare's day (pp. 30-32). The characteristics of an Elizabethan audience. Did Shakspeare write his plays for posterity or to please an audience of his own time?

SHAKSPEARE'S CAREER

When and where was Shakspeare born?

What can you say as to his education (p. 26)? His occupations before he went to London?

What do we know about his early years in London?

What were his first dramatic efforts (p. 28)? What other literary work, besides the writing of plays, did he do?

Learn the general characteristics of Shakspeare's work during each of the four periods into which it is divided, and the names of representative plays of each period (pp. 33-35).

Perry Pictures 73-75 have to do with Shakspeare and his home.

HAMLET—GENERAL QUESTIONS

From what sources are obtained the texts of our present-day edition of this play (p. 38)?

Why is the exact date of composition difficult to determine? What is the approximate date (p. 37)? What other plays were composed about the same time? What period of Shakspeare's life is this? What evidence is there within the play that *Julius Caesar* was composed after *Hamlet* (pp. 56 and 135)?

From what source has Shakspeare obtained the general outline of his story? What is the probable influence of an older play upon the same subject (p. 39)? Are any traces of it to be found in the present text? How has Shakspeare used this older play (pp. 40, 41)?

Questions on difficult passages and peculiar uses of words may be gathered from the full Notes (pp. 225-73).

PLOT IN DETAIL

How does the atmosphere of the first scene give us at once the tone of the whole play (pp. 51, 52)?

How is past history introduced? What further use is made of the narration on page 60?

Are we expecting the attitude that Hamlet assumes (p. 62)?

Compare the first soliloquy (p. 64) with the other two and explain its peculiar tone. What is the significance of its last line (p. 66)?

How do you explain Hamlet's behavior on Horatio's telling him of seeing his father?

What are the inciting forces put into motion in Act I?

What is the effect, on the further shaping of the drama, of the speeches of Laertes and Polonius to Ophelia in I, iii (pp. 71 ff.)? Note how their instructions are fully carried out by her (p. 96, ll. 108, 109).

Does the command of the ghost (p. 85, ll. 85, 86) have any later effect?

If we conclude that Hamlet decides to feign madness at the end of I, v, what reasons has he for doing so?

Does your interpretation of Hamlet's conduct in his interview with Ophelia agree with that of Polonius (p. 95)? Why is the interview given by narration rather than by action? Compare this with the interview in III, i. Why does Hamlet treat Ophelia so harshly, if he loves her? Did he know her weakness?

Interpret the interview between Polonius and Hamlet (pp. 104, 105).

Summarize all the scenes between Hamlet, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

Why is Polonius led to his diagnosis of Hamlet's case (p. 101)? Does this agree with your own interpretation?

Note the doubt still in Hamlet's mind (p. 120). When is it dissipated (p. 141)?

What is the purpose of the play within the play (p. 120)? How does Hamlet act the part of Chorus (p. 139)?

Note the forebodings on the part of the King (p. 129). What is the cause of Hamlet's resolution on page 145, lines 397 ff.?

Where is the climax of the play (p. 149)? Give your reasons. Why does Hamlet refuse to kill the King in III, ii (p. 149)? What are the consequences of his refusal? What is the dramatic use of it?

Describe the interview between Hamlet and his mother

(pp. 152 ff.). Is the ghost in this scene a real one, as in Act I, or only a creation of Hamlet's imagination?

What are the important steps in the downward action? Note how they are heaped up in Act IV. See the King's remark concerning this (p. 174, ll. 67 ff.).

What is the purpose of the comic element introduced by the grave-diggers' scene, V, i? Compare it with the later action in the same scene. Compare the porter's scene in *Macbeth*. (Lake English Classics, ed. Boynton-Neilson, p. 78).

Note Hamlet's slight rally in V, ii (p. 208). Does the *dénouement* come slowly or rapidly from this point on?

Show how the catastrophe fulfills the demands of tragedy.

PLOT IN GENERAL

Do you think that Shakspeare used Hamlet for a mouth-piece in the Osric scenes and in the discussion of the state of the theater?

Note the sporadic appearances of the Fortinbras scenes and how they are taken up after the catastrophe.

Does the tragedy seem to be one of fate rather than of character? Is it a good example of the "blood tragedy?" (For this point compare the description of the older play given on p. 40.)

What is the main theme of the tragedy? In what scene does its expression reach the highest pitch?

CHARACTERS

Do you find an attractive character in the play?

Is the King, with all his wickedness, a brave man (p. 176)?

Make a concise presentation of all the evidence you can gather from the play that Hamlet is mad, and a similar one of all the evidence that he is not mad.

Many explanations of Hamlet's weakness of character have been offered—moral sensitiveness and weakness of will; melancholy temperament; excessive reflection; love for Ophelia. Which theory seems to you strongest? Give reasons, with illustrations. Can these theories be made complementary?

Perry Picture 1001 is of Hamlet.

What is the function of Horatio in this play?

What is the function of Polonius and his philosophy? What is its source?

Do you consider Ophelia a weak character, brought to her fate by conventions of society? What would Portia have done under similar circumstances? Do you feel attracted towards Ophelia, or are you repulsed by her extreme obedience to her father? What were the causes of her madness?

Show how Fortinbras stands in dramatic contrast to Hamlet. Note Hamlet's own realization of this fact (p. 170).

Is Laertes a willfully bad man? What were his promptings? Does he readily grasp the evil suggestions of the King in IV, vii (pp. 183 ff.)? What were Hamlet's feelings towards him (p. 215)?

THEME SUBJECTS

1. Shakspeare's life (pp. 25-36).
2. The drama before Shakspeare (pp. 19-25).
3. The stage of Shakspeare's time (with illustration of how different parts of this play were presumably staged).
4. *Hamlet* and its source (pp. 38-42).
5. A different ending for the play.
6. Summary of the events that have preceded and lead up to this play.

7. The Ghost of Hamlet's father (its appearance, influences, etc.; pp. 53, 57, 79, etc.).

8. The true story of Hamlet and Ophelia (as the student conceives it, of course; it need hardly be said that a number of problematic matters are involved).

9. Paraphrases of one or more of the great soliloquies (pp. 64 ff., 124 ff., etc.).

10. Discussion of Hamlet's alleged insanity.

11. Hamlet and his mother (especially pp. 151-60).

12. The function of Horatio in the play, and his character.

13. Why did Hamlet hesitate to kill the King?

14. Character sketches of Polonius, the King, Laertes, Ophelia, the Queen, Osric.

15. The staging of the play within the play (a detailed statement of how this may have been handled to be effective; pp. 136 ff.).

16. Characteristics of Elizabethan acting (as indicated in the scenes with the players; pp. 112-18, 130-32, etc.).

17. The historical background of *Hamlet* (the relations with Norway).

18. Hamlet's trip to England (a narrative of just what happens; pp. 181-82, 205 ff.).

19. Ophelia's madness (how caused, what its symptoms, the result, etc.).

20. The King's plot with Laertes (pp. 185 ff.), and how it works out.

21. *Hamlet* and the earlier "tragedy of blood" (pp. 40-42).

22. The scene with the grave-diggers (purpose, effectiveness, etc.; pp. 192 ff.).

23. Impressions of some great actor in *Hamlet*.

24. Condensation of *Hamlet* for the stage (indica-

tion of the most important parts that must be left in, and of less important parts that can be omitted).

25. Three much-quoted passages and reasons for their popularity.

26. Is there a moral in the play? Discuss.

SELECTIONS FOR CLASS READING

1. The first appearances of the Ghost (pp. 52-54, 56-59).

2. Hamlet is reproved for his melancholy (pp. 62-64).

3. Hamlet's first soliloquy (pp. 64-66).

4. Hamlet hears of the Ghost (pp. 67-70).

5. Polonius and his children (pp. 71-76).

6. Hamlet and the Ghost (pp. 79-86, 88-90).

7. Ophelia and Hamlet (pp. 94-96, 100-104).

8. Polonius and Hamlet (pp. 104-6).

9. Hamlet on the race of man (p. 109).

10. Hamlet and the actors (pp. 112-18).

11. "To be or not to be" (pp. 124-26).

12. Hamlet and Ophelia (pp. 126-29).

13. Hamlet's advice to the players (pp. 130-32).

14. Hamlet on his plan to "catch the King" (pp. 133, 134).

15. The conclusion of the play within the play (pp. 139-42).

16. The King in his closet (pp. 148-50).

17. Hamlet and his mother (pp. 151-60).

18. Ophelia insane (pp. 172-75, 178, 179).

19. Ophelia's death (pp. 190, 191).

20. Hamlet and the grave-diggers (pp. 192-200).

21. The burial of Ophelia (pp. 202-4).

22. Hamlet and Osric (pp. 209-12).

23. The duel scene (pp. 214-21).

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

In the following parallel columns are given the most important dates in the history of English and American literature from Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* down to 1600. Special care has been taken to include the classics commonly read in high schools, so that the historical background of any given classic will be apparent from the table:

AMERICAN	ENGLISH
	1594-5 Shakspeare: <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i> .
	1596 (or earlier): <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> .
	1598 (or earlier): <i>The Merchant of Venice</i> .
	1599 <i>Henry V</i> .
	1599-1600 <i>As You Like It</i> .
1601-1700	
	1601 <i>Julius Caesar</i> .
	1602 <i>Hamlet</i> ; <i>Twelfth Night</i> (acted).
	1603 Queen Elizabeth died.
	1605 Bacon: <i>Advancement of Learning</i> .
1607 Jamestown founded.	
1608 J. Smith: <i>A True Relation</i> .	
1610 Strachey: <i>A True Reportory</i> .	1610 Shakspeare: <i>Macbeth</i> (acted).
	1611 <i>The Tempest</i> (acted).
	"King James" Bible printed.
	1612 Bacon: <i>Essays</i> (first edition, 1597).
	1614 Raleigh: <i>History of the World</i> .
	1616 Shakspeare died.
1620 Plymouth Colony founded.	1620 Bacon: <i>Novum Organum</i> .

AMERICAN

- 624 J. Smith: *The General History of Virginia*.
- 630 Massachusetts Bay Colony founded.
Bradford: *History of Plimoth Plantation* begun about this time.
Winthrop: *Journal* begun, ended 1649.
- 635 R. Mather: *Journal* (written).
- 636 Harvard College established.
- 638 New Haven founded.
- 640 *The Bay Psalm Book*.
- 644 Williams: *The Bloudy Tenent*.
- 650 A. Bradstreet: *Poems*.
- 662 Wigglesworth: *The Day of Doom*.
- 681 C. Mather: *Diary* begun.
- 682 Philadelphia founded.
- 689 King William's War.
- 692 Salem witchcraft trials.

ENGLISH

- 1623 Shakspeare: *Plays* (first folio edition).
- 1627 Drayton: *Ballad of Agincourt*.
- 1633 Milton: *L'Allegro and Il Penseroso*.
- 1634 Milton: *Comus* (acted).
- 1638 Trial of John Hampden.
Milton: *Lycidas* (published).
- 1642 Theaters closed.
Browne: *Religio Medici*.
- 1644 Milton: *Areopagitica*.
Battle of Marston Moor.
- 1648 Herrick: *Hesperides*.
- 1649 Charles I executed.
- 1653 Walton: *The Compleat Angler*.
- 1660 The monarchy restored.
Pepys: *Diary* begun, ended 1669.
- 1666 London fire.
- 1667 Milton: *Paradise Lost*.
- 1671 Milton: *Paradise Regained; Samson Agonistes*.
- 1674 Milton died.
- 1678 Bunyan: *Pilgrim's Progress*.
- 1681 Dryden: *Absalom and Achitophel*.
- 1682 Dryden: *MacFlecknoe*.
- 1688 The English Revolution.
- 1697 Dryden: *Alexander's Feast*.

